

# The WALKLEY Magazine

INSIDE THE MEDIA IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

## DIGITAL PHOTOJOURNALISM

### New ways of storytelling

Andrew Meares • Mike Bowers • Brian Cassey  
John Donegan • Ed Giles • Ivo Burum



**Muslims and the mainstream:  
bridging the divide**

Agnes Cusack

**Arrested, charged and  
forgotten in Egypt**

Austin Mackell

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Mark your diaries for our exciting calendar of events

### Walkley Awards & Media Conference - Canberra 2012

To help celebrate the upcoming Centenary of Canberra, our nation's capital plays host to the Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism for the first time in almost 30 years.

The Walkleys gala award presentation and dinner will be held at Parliament House: a perfect venue for recognising the important role of journalism in Australia's political history.

#### 57TH WALKLEY AWARDS GALA DINNER

Friday, November 30,  
Parliament House

*The Walkley Awards are supported by the Centenary of Canberra, an initiative of the ACT Government*

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### Finalist Announcement Schedule

#### PHOTOGRAPHIC FINALISTS

##### Sydney

Monday, October 15  
State Library of NSW  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

#### GENERAL FINALISTS

Simultaneous announcements in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane  
Thursday, October 18, 6 - 9pm  
Sydney: Verandah bar & restaurant  
55 - 65 Elizabeth Street, Sydney

#### BUSINESS FINALISTS

Sydney  
Tuesday, October 16  
(by invitation only)

#### DOCUMENTARY FINALISTS

Longlist to be screened at  
**Antenna Documentary Film Festival**  
(October 10-14, 2012)

Shortlist announcement:  
closing night of **Antenna Documentary Film Festival** – Sunday

October 14  
Venue: Dendy Newtown  
(by invitation only)

#### WALKLEY BOOK AWARD LONG LUNCH (SHORTLIST ANNOUNCEMENT):

Thursday, November 8  
in Sydney  
(by invitation only)

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**Journalists need to be retrained in the new tools of storytelling and be open to experiment with the new opportunities that digital offers**

## A time for bold thinking

**A**s News Limited and Fairfax Media grapple with integrating their newsrooms to produce multi-platform content, it's important to remember that journalism has always been confronted with and embraced technological change.

The Media Alliance has been at the forefront of examining these changes. In October 2008 we published our first report on the future of journalism, *Life in the Clickstream*, focusing on the massive impact that digital technology was having in the US and in Europe and examining what it would mean. Two years later we produced a second updated report and included a set of recommendations on what journalists, commercial news media and governments should do to be ready for the digital revolution's tidal wave of changes.

We recommended that journalists needed to *innovate*: to be retrained in the new tools of storytelling and be open to experiment with the new opportunities that digital offers.

We recommended that commercial media *invest*: in training, innovation, experimentation and technology platforms. Certainly, media companies have engaged with new technology, but many also chose to axe hundreds of journalists, sabotaging the quality journalism that audiences want. Other companies remained doggedly slow to integrate their digital and print operations despite journalists calling on

them to tear down the illogical platform divide between the two.

We asked governments to *engage*. "Engage with the major industry stakeholders to promote a strategy that will support both commercial and non-profit journalism as the cornerstones of a healthy news media."

Sadly, what we got from recent government inquiries are proposals that fail to address what is taking place.

The most disappointing message came from the Finkelstein Report. While it called for a government regulator for the media, it also concluded that now was not the time for government support of the media industry because anticipated new players would enter the market and that "may lead to more democratic diversity".

It also recommended that "within the next two years or so" the Productivity Commission should conduct an inquiry into the health of the news industry. Barely three months later, News and Fairfax were announcing sweeping restructures along with journalist redundancies that threaten to reduce the breadth and depth of journalism that is vital for an informed society and a functioning democracy.

A month after Finkelstein, the Australian Press Council announced it had restructured itself with greater funding commitments from its members (including the Media Alliance) and had welcomed several new online media members. Clearly

the industry and new media were willing to demonstrate it could regulate itself.

By the end of April, the government's Convergence Review appeared to have accepted this, with its recommendation of an all-media and largely self-funded self-regulator, saying the Finkelstein model should only be adopted "as a last resort".

Then came calls for a "public interest test" – a decade-old concept that again places more barriers to entry for new players willing to invest in quality journalism. Hopefully, government will recognise the need to engage is urgent.

Meanwhile, as this issue of the Walkley demonstrates, journalists have heeded the call to innovate. In the space of 20 years, photojournalists have gone from flying black-and-white film back to the office to using mobile devices as a new tool for storytelling. And as the photographers say themselves, the ability to do so much more with a camera has been enormously liberating, providing new opportunities to captivate an audience.

Journalism has always adapted to new technology. It will continue to do so. But if journalism is to continue to cover issues with the scope and scale it does now, then it's time for smart ideas and bold thinking. Near-empty newsrooms are no good for anyone.

**Christopher Warren**

Federal Secretary  
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# The WALKLEY magazine



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**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of The Walkley Foundation or the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance.

## CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

The Walkley Magazine, the only forum for discussion of media and professional issues by and for journalists, welcomes contributions from journalists, artists and photographers. To maintain the tradition and be worthy of the Walkleys, The Walkley Magazine aims to be a pithy, intelligent and challenging read, and to stand as a record of interesting news in the craft and profession of journalism. It is published five times a year and guidelines for contributors are available on request.



## Young journos show innovation

ABC TV journalist Jake Sturmer took home the 2012 Walkley Young Australian Journalist of the Year in June this year for his 7.30 *Western Australia* report, "Kataning Hostel Abuse" – a confronting story of child sexual abuse victims.

Sturmer's interviews detailed the significant emotional and psychological damage inflicted on four now-adult victims of sexual abuse at a youth hostel in Western Australia.

The report triggered the state government to launch an inquiry that was recently widened to include another hostel. It also encouraged other victims of child sexual abuse to come forward. Sturmer has continued to cover the inquiry for ABC radio, television and online.

Award judges were impressed with Sturmer's ability to secure these interviews and the manner in which he conducted them. They praised his great skill and empathy in helping the victims speak publicly about their ordeals. "These pieces were of great national interest and demonstrated public benefit," the judges said.

Sturmer's report was one of many strong entries received this year. "I was very impressed by the journalistic quality, the professionalism and innovation shown by the Young Australian Journalist of the Year award winners and finalists. It's encouraging to see journalists demonstrate so much skill at such an early stage of their careers," said Walkley Advisory Board chairman Laurie Oakes.

Based in Perth, Jake Sturmer started his career in commercial radio in 2008. One year later he joined the ABC as a cadet journalist. Since 2010 he has worked as a television current affairs reporter for the ABC's *Stateline* and 7.30 WA programs. In 2011, his report exposing a land deal that left buyers millions of dollars out of pocket won the WA Media Award for best current affairs report.

Gina McKeon, from community station FBi Radio, was highly commended by the Walkley Board for her in-depth program on the St Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and residents of The Block in Sydney's Redfern.



The board applauded McKeon's capacity to draw surprising confessions from those she interviewed. "She produced a powerful community portrait reflective of the broader schisms within the Catholic church."

Other winners were ABC Open's Miranda Grant, for her online coverage of a community devastated by the Queensland floods; Jason Edwards from Leader Newspapers for his photographic portrait of a struggling family waiting for government assistance following the Black Saturday bushfires; and *The Sunday Times'* Anthony DeCeglie for his investigative report on Karl O'Callaghan and the Perth Hills bushfires.

Foxtel's director of corporate affairs, Bruce Meagher, highlighted the importance of quality journalism. "Foxtel is proud to be the major sponsor of the Walkley Young Australian Journalist of the Year Awards for the fifth year

2012 Walkley Young Australian Journalist of the Year Award winners (from left) Anthony DeCeglie, Miranda Grant, Jake Sturmer, Gina McKeon and Jason Edwards

running. Quality journalism is at the heart of Foxtel's news offering, and in order to keep it this way we believe it is important to continue to recognise and support exceptional young talent in this industry."

As 2012 winner, Sturmer will have a three-week trip to newsrooms at the BBC in London and CNN in Atlanta.

More than 110 young journalists (age 26 and under) entered this year's awards across five media categories: print, radio, television, online and photography.

See more of the Walkley Young Journalist of the Year winners and their stories on page 35. Or visit [www.walkleys.com/young-australian-journalist-of-the-year](http://walkleys.com/young-australian-journalist-of-the-year) to read about our finalists.

## Fake by-lines masked hyperlocal hypocrisy

US non-profit radio network NPR claims hyperlocal content provider Journatic used false by-lines in several stories that were featured in TribLocal, the *Chicago Tribune*'s network of community websites and print editions.

The newspaper's parent company, Tribune Co., bought a stake in Journatic in April, with the aim of outsourcing all hyperlocal editorial content to Journatic reporters and editors. The radio report has triggered an investigation by the *Chicago Tribune*. Journatic has acknowledged its mistake and said it would discontinue the practice.

Journatic co-founder and CEO Brian Timpone admitted that altered by-lines were commonly used for its Blockshopper.com real estate stories, which were republished on TribLocal sites – violating the *Tribune*'s editorial ethics policies. "It was an oversight on our part – we should have addressed that," he said.

Former Journatic contributor, freelancer Ryan Smith, who spoke to NPR about his experience, claims editors who use the outsourced service are unaware that the supposedly hyperlocal copy actually comes from writers in other US cities and even the Philippines and various African countries.

Fake by-lines are rife, he told *The Guardian*. "I noticed the alias system on the stories almost right away – a Filipino writer named Junbe, for example, could become Jimmy Finkel and Gisele Bautista."

Smith added: "My primary goal in 'blowing the whistle' wasn't to punish Journatic... It was to motivate NPR listeners to care more about the state of newspapers – even if that would cost me a \$2000-a-month job. Maybe the public could be convinced not only to hold newspapers to a higher standard, but also to invest more money in them. Quality journalism doesn't come cheap."

## Get your entries in

The 2012 Queensland Clarion Awards presentation dinner will be held on Saturday, August 25 at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. See [clarions.org/awards](http://clarions.org/awards) for full details.

The 2012 Northern Territory Media Awards are now open for entries and will close on August 24. See [ntmediaawards.alliance.org.au](http://ntmediaawards.alliance.org.au) for full details. The awards presentation dinner will be held on Saturday, October 6 at Sky City, Darwin.

The 2012 Western Australia Media Awards entries opened on July 30 and will close on September 7, with the awards presentation on Saturday, November 3 at the Hyatt Regency Perth. See [wamediaawards.com.au](http://wamediaawards.com.au) for full details.



## Guardian crowd-sources news

Imagine if your audience knew what stories you were working on before you finished them? In fact, what if your audience could access your outlet's daily news list online and submit their ideas about each story?

That's just what *The Guardian* has been experimenting with as it continues to embark on a path of what it calls "open journalism". It's a bold attempt to engage the newspaper's readers in what is usually journalism's most closely guarded secret: what will be in tomorrow's paper.

In October last year, the newspaper began to publish a blog at [www.guardian.co.uk/news/series/open-newslist](http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/series/open-newslist) offering a "carefully selected portion" of upcoming national, international and business stories its journalists were working on. Journalism.co.uk says the paper then encourages readers to contact reporters and editors via Twitter using #opennews – the aim being to help news desks with ideas and clues on how to pursue the stories. The paper doesn't give everything away – exclusives, embargoed and legally sensitive stories are withheld from the open news list.

The *Guardian* took the process a step further, adding a comment thread to the blog but that has now been withdrawn. National editor Dan Roberts says the paper felt readers needed more focused requests. "Literally thousands of readers have got involved in stories we've done in this way so we know there's a demand out there," he told Journalism.co.uk.

When the paper asked people to test their broadband speeds, more than 5000 readers participated within three days. Meanwhile, another of the newspaper's blogs has invited readers to assist with fact checking on "big issues" of the moment. Another open journalism exercise is asking readers to suggest topics they would like other readers to comment on.

## HK journos fear for freedom under Leung

There are fears that press freedom will be further restricted in Hong Kong under the administration of its new chief executive, Leung Chun-Ying. Leung, who has a background in real estate, took office on July 1.

A survey of 663 respondents by International Federation of Journalists' affiliate member, the Hong Kong Journalists Association, found that 60 per cent of media personnel anticipated press freedom would be further restricted during Leung's tenure. More than 90 per cent believed press freedom in Hong Kong was declining due to tighter local government controls, self-censorship and interference by the Chinese Liaison Office of the Chinese government.

In the lead-up to Leung's election by the 1200-strong Election Committee (Leung, one of three candidates, received 57.4 per cent of the vote), there were allegations the Liaison Office had been asking media outlets to support Leung or to cease writing negative stories about him. Some media allegedly complied.

After the election but before Leung took up the chief executive post, at least two media outlets received letters sent from Leung's office after they published "negative" stories about him. Some media also complained that Leung would only grant interviews to "friendly" media outlets and would deny opportunities for all media to question him about his platform. In July, the *Ming Pao Daily* newspaper disclosed Leung had made personal phone calls to the newspaper's editor-in-chief after Leung learnt the paper was conducting an investigation into illegal structures at Leung's house on The Peak.

Another Hong Kong paper, the *Apple Daily News*, has filed a lawsuit against police after one of its journalists was briefly detained after trying to ask China's President Hu Jintao a question about the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre during his official visit to Hong Kong to attend Leung's inauguration ceremony.

The Hong Kong Journalists Association has urged the police force to stop using "mainland policing" tactics in Hong Kong.



China's President Hu Jintao (right) and Leung Chun-Ying (at left) at a ceremony for Hong Kong's 15th anniversary of its return to China at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on July 1, 2012.  
PHOTO: THE YOMIURI SHIMBUN VIA AP IMAGES

## Convergence Review backs self-regulation

The Media Alliance has cautiously welcomed the recommendations of the federal government's Convergence Review, which examined the policy and regulatory frameworks for the media and communications landscape in Australia.

The Review proposed there be a News Standards Body, drawn from all media, to self-regulate news content through a media code. Its aim would be to promote fairness, accuracy and transparency in professional news and commentary.

"The Convergence Review has rejected the Finkelstein Inquiry's approach of imposing a government regulator, instead opting to allow the media industry to demonstrate that it can and should be allowed to regulate itself. This is what the Alliance has been calling for all along," says the Alliance's federal secretary, Chris Warren. "Clearly, the Convergence Review believes self-regulation is the way to go."

At the moment, complaints about print and online go to the Australian Press Council, and the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) deals with radio and television.

The News Standard Body would ditch that divide, allowing the industry to work together on maintaining standards and promoting quality journalism, while also recognising the opportunities and disruption that digital technology brings.

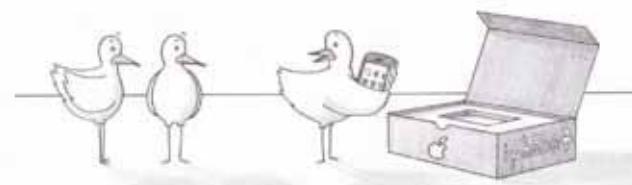
"By tearing down artificial barriers, the Review is recognising that it is the journalism in news content that is vital and not which platform audiences receive their news and entertainment on," says Warren.

Recently the Press Council confirmed increased funding and commitment from its print members, including the Media Alliance. Four online media outlets have now also joined the Press Council.

"The Press Council has got its house in order and the Convergence Review has recognised this. The Press Council is therefore in the best position to be the model and foundation of the Review's proposed News Standards Body," Warren says.

The Alliance also welcomes the Review's approach to media ownership. The Review recommends discarding a confusing mish-mash of rules in favour of a minimum number of owners rule and the application of a public interest test aimed at curtailing the appetites of media moguls that have gobbled up small media outlets only to then deny audiences local content.

"The Convergence Review has clearly heard the message about the need for a diversity of voices in Australia's media landscape while also being flexible enough to encourage media groups to acquire media assets prudently, keeping audience needs at the top of mind," says Warren.



"So am I just automatically on Twitter?"

## SA honours its own

Lights dimmed and technology in the form of Skype brought the 2012 South Australian Journalist of the Year to the 250 guests at the National Wine Centre for the Ninth SA Media Ball.

*Sunday Mail*'s state political editor Brad Crouch – who was in Sydney on work assignment – was watching the awards on Skype when he was announced as the Journalist of the Year. Earlier, he had won the Silver Award for Best Print Journalist.

The judges said that Crouch pursued the hard edge of serious news, yet beyond the hard-bite his writing has a sensitive core.

The *Sunday Mail* scored again with Alice Monfries named the Best Young Journalist.

The ABC's Prue Adams took out the TV broadcast award, while freelancer Sharon Mascall won for radio.

Sean McGowan of *The Islander* was named South Australia's best photographer for the second time.

Recently retired Advertiser sports photographer, the legendary Ray Titus, was inducted into the SA Media Hall of Fame. Titus was honoured for his photographic contribution to the sports world spanning more than 40 years.

Media Alliance SA branch secretary, Angelique Ivanica, said: "The calibre of work was outstanding with many first-time entrants and a significant number of entries from regional South Australia."

To see a full list of the winners go to [samediaawards.com.au](http://samediaawards.com.au).



Twenty-six bronze, silver and gold awards were presented at this year's SA Media Ball, held at the National Wine Centre in Adelaide on Saturday, May 12.

## What's the Story: CAPITAL EDITION



### WALKLEY MEDIA CONFERENCE 2012

November 29-30 • National Film & Sound Archive • ACT



To help celebrate the upcoming Centenary of Canberra, The Walkley Foundation's annual media conference is coming to the nation's capital for the first time.

*What's the Story: Capital Edition* features two days of talks, discussions and debates on the latest trends and updates on key issues in print, broadcast, long-form journalism, digital media and more:

- International speakers: New York Times new media editor Aron Pilhofer, 'No Time To Think' author Charles Feldman and Center for Sustainable Journalism founder Leonard Witt
- Thought leaders from across Australia on topics ranging from the public interest debate to the latest digital media trends and new financial models for journalism's future
- Live events including an illustration session with newspaper cartoonists, and a 'What's Your Angle?' session where local writers pitch their story ideas to genuine industry players

Mark the date in your diaries now!

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Visit [www.walkleyconference.com.au](http://www.walkleyconference.com.au) for all the latest news and speakers

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## Buffet finds value in print

At last! Someone with deep pockets buying media businesses with the aim of building them up, not stripping them back. No, it's not Gina Rinehart. It's Warren Buffett, CEO of investment group Berkshire Hathaway, who is listed as the world's third richest person.

In June his company bought 63 mostly small-town US newspapers, 23 of them dailies with an aggregate circulation of 800,000, for US\$142 million from debt-strapped Media General. Berkshire Hathaway is also taking a 20 per cent stake in Media General, in return for \$400 million and a \$25 million line of credit.

Buffett adds his purchase to his existing World-Herald group of six daily and several weekly newspapers, headquartered in his hometown of Omaha, Nebraska. Combined, his print assets now make Buffett a significant player in the US media industry. It also provides some encouragement to people in media who have been battered by five years of cutbacks and closures, particularly in print.

The print investments fit Buffett's overall investment philosophy: finding value. Observers say that with more media groups beginning to charge for online content, the anticipated boost to profit margins begins to make investing in newspapers more attractive.

Media General has retained a struggling group of newspapers around Tampa, Florida, and a small number of NBC-affiliated TV stations.



Warren Buffett. COURTESY AAP

## Journo takes BBC hot seat

Former BBC television journalist George Entwistle has been announced as the BBC's new director general, and will move into the role on September 17. A former host of the BBC's *Newsnight* and a *Panorama* journalist, he will take over from Mark Thompson, who has been director general of the BBC since 2004. Entwistle is currently director of BBC Vision – responsible for commissioning, producing and broadcasting across BBC television and the web.

He joined the BBC in 1989 as a broadcast journalism trainee, after working as a writer and magazine editor with Haymarket Magazines. He became an assistant producer on *Panorama*, where he worked on the program's coverage of the first Gulf War, the fall of Margaret Thatcher, and an investigation into how the Tiananmen Square protest leaders were spirited out of China.

In a press release, Entwistle said: "I'm very excited about all that lies ahead. I love the BBC and it's a privilege to be asked to lead it into the next stage of its creative life."

Back in February, there were rumours that the ABC's managing director (and former journalist) Mark Scott was in the running for the job, but he said at the time: "I have got a contract as a media CEO that still has four and a half years to run. I fully expect that the next head of the BBC will be British."



Antenna Documentary Festival  
10-14 October 2012  
[www.antennafestival.org](http://www.antennafestival.org)



# A snap of the future

**Andrew Meares** believes photography can thrive in this era of smartphones and digital platforms, but doing it well still relies on traditional news skills

The darkroom was a place of magic. It was another world. The inverse promise of a film negative. The magical waving of your hands to control light from the enlarger. The emergence of a print from a soup of chemicals. It was tangible, it was real and it was photography.

But as silver halide crystals have given way to digital pixels, what is photography's future?

A very real crisis is upon us all, as the entire media industry struggles with audience relevance and plummeting funding models. Photographers are particularly vulnerable as the culture of curating replaces creation. A photograph is now a colourful arrangement of pixels on a screen near you. From conception to copyright infringement with the right click of a mouse. Tumblr accounts, meme distributors, mummy bloggers and, increasingly, mainstream media, actively pursue a viable business model where photography comes free – as long as they get a click on the way through.

Perhaps the answer to both these dilemmas lies, again, with innovation.

Just as we must reinvent the newspaper, we must also redefine photography. We can no longer rely simply on the evolution of camera technology to solve this crisis.

While the transmission of photos over a phone line was part of the news workflow from the 1930s, 21 years ago on a warm December night, I was all alone in *The Sydney Morning Herald* darkroom. A few hours earlier, flashbulbs had sprayed their staccato light fusing the image onto the film. I then fled through the corridors of power to a waiting taxi, dashing to Canberra airport to fly the film back to Sydney.

Australia had a new prime minister. Paul Keating had defeated Bob Hawke 56–51 in a party room ballot.

I emerged from the darkroom with a fresh print, eager to share my image, only to notice the newsroom was deserted. In the far corner, crowded around the lone television, the whole news floor and no doubt most across the nation were watching Hawke's predictably tearful farewell press conference – live.

The power of a photograph is in the sharing. The primary role of photojournalists is to link a subject with a viewer in a meaningful way. On this historic night, the constraints of time, place and chemistry had meant the overwhelming tasking of sharing my image had rendered it obsolete.



**A photograph is now a colourful arrangement of pixels on a screen near you. From conception to copyright infringement with the right click of a mouse**

Outside that very same party room, another prime ministerial leadership challenge unfolded earlier this year, with Julia Gillard defeating Kevin Rudd 71–31.

This time my wi-fi enabled digital camera could connect the unfolding events in that corridor to a significant audience instantly, via The Pulse liveblog on the *National Times* website, as well as providing a permanent historical record in print. Photography is the true "multimedia medium", able to be displayed across all platforms from mobile to web, video, apps and, of course, in print.

Photojournalism has remained relevant through the constant embrace of change. We once made and scanned prints from the most unlikely locations to send over the wire. Negative scanners eventually replaced the need for a print. And for more than a decade, the digital photography revolution has allowed us to file live. Now the media industry is finally catching up with our workflow. Our capability is required now more than ever.

A confused crowd gathered around my laptop as I sent my first digital photo in

1998 from the roadside of a truck accident. I knew my working life wouldn't be the same. Although the image quality was far inferior to film, my pictures were better as I could remain on the job longer, unencumbered by the need to process and scan a negative. When shooting film, you usually only had time to send one or two pictures from a job.

The game had changed. The deadline had shifted to when I was ready to file. I could now send as many frames as I wanted, instantly. The era of the necessarily stooged picture was replaced with a documentary approach. The good, the bad and the ugly were now made available for publication both in print and online for the first time.

Digital photography innovations swept the industry and enabled the public to be better informed. We were now able to send pictures from the jungles of East Timor via a satellite phone, bringing home the tragedy and helping shape the response. The breadth of stunning coverage from every aspect of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was only made possible by the digital camera roll-out.

Colly Thomas reacts to a mouse held by his father, Murray, in May 2011. A conceptual photo taken for *The Sydney Morning Herald* that targets emotion and the split-second timing of news photography with on-location studio lighting.

PHOTO: ANDREW MEARES

► As the Twin Towers were struck in New York in 2001, there was an expectation that the event would be photographed and made immediately available from every angle. Digital photography was now well and truly part of our consciousness.

Following the 2002 summer bushfires, I wanted to find a way to bypass transmission via a laptop so we could literally file on the run with just a camera and a mobile data connection. In scenes reminiscent of Apollo 11 (the first iPhone was still five years away), we hacked a personal digital assistant and patiently waited as the fledgling 2G mobile network uploaded our images. We knew then that things could only get better as camera technology and telecommunications would no doubt improve.

In the last decade, photography has been democratised – the huge clunky, slow, digital cameras that cost \$20,000 have now evolved to a camera everywhere. This year, camera phones will outsell point-and-shoot cameras. Empowered by super-fast internet connectivity linked to an ever-increasing participatory social network, we all now have access to the ultimate image sharing workflow we once dreamed of.

It is a paradox that as the digital age morphs into the mobile age, photography is increasingly accessible to all, but the unique power of a photograph has been eroded. From black and white prints and the advent of colour; Kodak Brownies and Polaroids; scanning negatives and digital imaging; camera phones and video frame grabs; 3D and 360 degrees; timelapse and helicam drones; high dynamic range and cinemagraphs; Google street view, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest – our world is reproduced, represented and now reblogged more than ever before.

To understand how visually stimulated we now are, consider this: 3500 photos are uploaded to Facebook each second. That's over 12.6 million an hour or around 300 million a day. Mark Zuckerberg holds over 140 billion of our photos in his album. With a staggering 1900 per cent growth since 2010,



### My old skills of being in the right place at the right time are serving me well in the new media age

#### TOP 5 TIPS:

- 1 Be well read.
- 2 Know your medium.
- 3 Be technically proficient.
- 4 Build trust with your subject.
- 5 Understand your audience.

the Instagram photography app posed both a threat and an opportunity to Zuckerberg's photography business and was snapped up by Facebook for a cool US\$1 billion.

The Kodak Brownie proclaimed: "You press the button – we do the rest." Today that slogan could apply to the mathematical algorithm used by Instagram that evokes the nostalgic authenticity of the film era, just as Kodak – once a photographic behemoth – files for bankruptcy. Instagram combines a need for easy post-production with a desire for self-publishing. A smh.com.au weather blog recently praised "instagram-tastic" contributions and proclaimed: "Isn't technology wonderful – it makes everyone a professional photographer with just an iPhone."

If we are all "professional" photographers now, beyond photos of cats, in a world awash with images, what is our contribution to be?

The innovation of photography in the late 19th century liberated the need for an artist's interpretation to provide a literal representation of the world. Newspaper illustrations were consigned to history and the newspaper photograph was celebrated.

Television eventually replaced news photography as the primary visual medium. Despite this, photojournalists have filled a crucial role through the insightful capturing of humanity, distilled best by any iconic image our collective memories recall. The infrequent but eloquent images emerging from contemporary Syria are testament to the need for photojournalists to speak the truth.

But the full artistic liberation of photography is yet to occur. Joerg Colberg recently wrote of a "stasis" in contemporary photography with a reliance on "nostalgia". He could very well have been commenting on the state of the newsprint industry.

With everything photographed, where does a sense of progress come from? An inherent conservatism is limiting our acceptance and exploration of "new" photography, leading to an "existential crisis".

Photojournalists embody change. They must.

Their purpose is to capture and share a moment of transition, to provide clarity in a complex world.

Anticipation is our leverage.

Photojournalists know when a cricket wicket will fall by watching the batsman's feet. Where the mark will be taken. When and where the action will climax. We all know the secret to any fast-moving team sport is to not follow the ball but to watch the gaps.

Know your game and follow your gut.

Photojournalism is in profound transition beyond the decline of newspapers. We need to anticipate new ways of working, earning and connecting. Watch the gaps.

So too must the Media Alliance pivot to provide meaningful support for copyright protection, training and assistance for an ever-increasing casualised and outsourced workforce.

Free from the strict form of the newspaper photograph, for the last eight years I have gathered audio and video as well as photos to help tell my stories better. I'm still a first responder with the best seat in the house to history unfolding. My old skills of being in the right place at the right time are serving me well in the new media age. I'm still a storyteller be it with a single frame, a gallery or a major production. The nonlinear timeline is now my creative darkroom. I live blog and dabble in cartoons, and my work goes viral in memes.

Innovation and experimentation may not pay the rent or save the industry, but as Citizen Kane of the fictitious *New York Inquirer* said: "I don't know how to run a newspaper. I just try everything I can think of."

Photography is more relevant today than ever before. The tablet apps and web galleries demand our stunning work. Our language has won. Sure, everything has been photographed – we just have to do it better. Our only limit is our creativity.

**Andrew Meares** is chief photographer for Fairfax Media in its Canberra bureau. He won a Walkley in 2010 for best online journalism for his coverage of the federal election

## Telling True Stories.

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Applications close Friday 21 September.



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# 6 of the BEST

## How will you adapt to readers moving from paper to digital devices?

The digitisation of content has changed little of what I concentrate on. As a group, photographers are fairly used to change, as we are so reliant on ever-evolving equipment. The media we use to get images to viewers has always been in constant flux. It's a common misconception that the big change for photographers was going from film to digital cameras. In reality it was barely a blip on the radar when compared to the transition several years earlier of working with enlargers in a darkroom to then scanning negatives in Photoshop.

**Simon Schluter, photographer, *The Age***

We have all been evolving since the day we walked out of the darkrooms. At Fairfax the photography department has evolved from black and white to colour, and then around 2000 to the digitisation of photography: digital cameras, digital pictures, changes in the environment and in technology. It's a constantly evolving process for us.

We shoot for iPad, for smartphones, for [smh.com.au](http://smh.com.au) and also shoot for print. We shoot a lot of photos these days and a lot of what I call packages of both stills and vision.

It is an evolving process for us and, for me, a gradual process since 2000. All the evolving for me has been, as a press photographer, surviving. It's meant I've had to constantly adapt, year-in year-out, to survive in this industry.

**Brendan Esposito, chief photographer, *The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald***

The "digital revolution" has created an amazing opportunity for photographers to provide additional content in support of the traditional photo in print. We now have the scope to share multiple images online to highlight an event that can even expand into galleries. We also now have the ability

Six photographers give their take on our digital future, social media and more



to shoot video, which is becoming more prevalent as we embrace digital platforms and, of course, all of this can be shot and filed for online at any time of the day or night, from anywhere in the world.

**Stuart McEvoy, photographer, *The Australian***

I cut my teeth as a photographer in the days before digital cameras, but being a tech-head, the digital world is something that really excites me. I think the digitisation of content will allow photographers to tell a truer story. It's not just one photo being printed in the paper any more – with every job there is the opportunity to tell a more detailed story via slideshows and video.

**Dan Himbrechts, freelance photographer**

My entire professional career has been online for News Corporation, but curiously much of my work has ended up in print and that's solely a by-product of the way I worked, rather than the publication I worked for. I discovered when I was starting out that I could rarely beat the wires and other press photographers in getting my images filed first, so decided to go in the opposite direction. Rather than busting a gut to get the same frames as everybody else, I spend longer on each shoot, took a wider range of images and in pretty much every

case, used my time to create a photo story that would be displayed as a gallery. Taking the idea of photojournalism and applying an online feel to it – I really enjoyed it and the readers did as well.

**Charles Brewer, news.com.au picture editor and photographer, 2007–2012**

A young Tibetan boy sings at his grandmother's home in Jiuzhaigou, south-west China. PHOTO: APRIL FONTI

## How do you compete with user generated content (that is, amateur photographers) and social media?

Over the years there has been some fantastic content provided by readers simply because they were in the right spot at the right time. The advent of the phone camera especially has seen this spiral, but I don't see it as competition. You can't be everywhere at once but the fact that someone else is, I think, is a welcome bonus. It gives us a starting point from which to expand a story. Sometimes you can get lucky with a shot but the majority of our job is going into a known situation and working to capture the essence of the story by using your own knowledge and experience.

**Stuart McEvoy, photographer, *The Australian***

I think the increase in user generated content makes the photography game all the more exciting. User generated content

► is democratising news photography, especially when it comes to spot news photography. But your average punter with an iPhone isn't going to get intimate access to politicians, CEOs or large events where accreditation is required. So I don't really think of user generated content or amateur photographers as "competition".

I think photography social media apps such as Instagram have helped connect photographers, professional and amateur, and in turn having that feed of images at your fingertips at any time of the day then becomes inspiration to make more pictures.

**Dan Himbrechts, freelance photographer**

After 25 years in the business, I am still employed because of my brain, because of the way I can intellectualise photographs, how I conduct myself on the job, and because of my ability as a journalist to be able to convey a message visually.

**Brendan Esposito, chief photographer, The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald**

### What drives you to get out of bed in an increasingly competitive photographic world?

I think if you asked any photographer why they did it they would probably say it was because they loved photography. Personally I enjoy meeting different people and trying to capture a snippet of their lives to share with the rest of the world. Working on *The Australian* has given me the opportunity to go to incredible places and meet some amazing people, not only within the state but nationally and internationally as well.

**Stuart McEvoy, photographer, The Australian**

I get enormous satisfaction from submitting a picture that I've spent time assembling the elements for and then executed. It's a buzz that hasn't worn off, especially when you've created the concept from the ground up.

I try to turn off emotionally as soon as I've hit the send button, as my baby is out in the ether or in print and how it's treated is beyond my control. Savage crops, clashing adverts, a lousy run, etc, can be soul destroying so I tend to avoid looking at how

they're run if possible – it can get ugly on the drive home.

The competitive nature of photography occasionally finds you in a melodramatic tailspin of self-doubt, swearing "I'll never shoot again" after stumbling across some piece of brilliance shot by a 16-year-old with an iPhone. But ironically, it's often that which keeps you going.

**Simon Schluter, photographer, The Age**

I see each day shooting pictures as a chance to try something new, or try to do something better than I have done it before.

**Dan Himbrechts, freelance photographer**

The travel photography market is oversaturated, but knowing this helped me get away from even considering trying to take, say, a perfect shot of the Taj Mahal. Instead, I concentrated on learning local languages and gaining the kind of rapport and human interaction that make a different kind of travel photo.

For example, I could find a tiny village of artisans in a desert, spend a few nights there sleeping in a hut and helping cook and getting to know people, etc. Then write a story and take a series of photos that have value because it's something different.

Once I spent a month living with a Tibetan family over the Tibetan New Year period. We drank homemade



barley wine every night. Yak herders and monks often dropped by and performed some traditional singing. I rarely pulled out my camera during these things. But then one night a young boy was asked to sing. He went to a Chinese school and had forgotten their traditional songs, so he started singing some Chinese pop songs that he learnt from watching TV. The older nomads in the room were upset.

I think I only shot one or two frames, but I feel this quiet moment told so much about their lives and the sadness of what's going in their culture, in a way that still has a place in travel stories.

**April Fonti, deputy picture editor, AAP**

Above: An Indigenous boy stands in Hyde Park at the start of a Sorry Day procession in Sydney, May 26, 2008. It marked the 10th anniversary of the first Sorry Day.

PHOTO: CHARLES BREWER/ COURTESY OF NEWS LTD

Below: PNG women gather at Parliament House in Port Moresby to show support for a bill that would have changed the constitution to increase the representation of women in politics.

PHOTO: STUART MCEVOY/ THE AUSTRALIAN



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## How do you feel about the outsourcing of photography work by media companies. Does that scare or excite you?

This is a hard one for me to answer because I am a freelancer, however I do most of my work for a single masthead (*The Australian*). What worries me about the outsourcing is I think the photographer needs to have a connection to the masthead, be across the news cycle and know intimately the way that masthead tackles stories. I worry about the model some British newspapers have rolled out, using only agencies for their news content. It doesn't give the paper a chance to have its own unique take on a story. They become limited to telling the story through one of the pictures available on the wire, pictures that several other media outlets may also be using.

**Dan Himbrechts, freelance photographer**

I think that companies have always outsourced photography and used wire services for less critical jobs as a way of freeing up resources for the more involved ones. I think that if you want to retain control and integrity of your publication you would always lean towards staff photographers that are in sync with the company's direction and dedicated to achieving the desired result. More than ever, the time-sensitive demands of breaking news on digital platforms calls for a response from people that are not only prepared for the task but focused on the end result, and no-one can do this better than a staff photographer.

**Stuart McEvoy, photographer, *The Australian***

Outsourcing is something that I think we have to become comfortable with. It is the economic climate that's really dictating this, because of staff levels. But a good photographer will always be employed. Someone who is a true believer and pushes themselves to be the best they can be every day will always survive.

**Brendan Esposito, chief photographer, *The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald***

## What recent events do you wish you had photographed?

Ach during the tsunami is something I wish I'd photographed. I still have a desire to go to Afghanistan to photograph the conflict there.

There are some images that will stand the test of time and if I could take one of those photographs, then I will have had a successful career. Images have the power to bring about awareness and, as a collective, the photographic fraternity has the power for change.

**Brendan Esposito, chief photographer, *The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald***

The one event that stands out recently was the prime minister and opposition leader being rushed out of the Lobby Restaurant in Canberra by their security detail. You definitely don't see that every day and there are some cracking news pics as a result.

**Stuart McEvoy, photographer, *The Australian***

I rarely find myself wishing I'd shot an event gone by. There are a million pictures in my head, so I sit and wait till the right subject comes along. Usually it works but occasionally I find myself having to explain to editors or the talent themselves why I want to shoot them dangling from a hook holding a tuna!

**Simon Schluter, photographer, *The Age***

## Who out there is inspiring you?

Tracey Nearmy. She can take the most ordinary photo op and turn it into something mysterious and beautiful. She's also one of the most humble photographers you could meet, which makes her a photo editor's dream.

**April Fonti, deputy picture editor, AAP**

There are many master photographers that have inspired me over the years. I have had some association with photographic agency VII: James Nachtwey, Gary Knight, Antonin Kratochvil. And local photographers of world acclaim, particularly Tim Clayton and Steve Christo, also inspire me.

**Brendan Esposito, chief photographer, *The Sydney Morning Herald and Sun-Herald***

Hand on heart, I am bowled over by Brazilian photojournalist Sebastião Salgado. But from a historical perspective it was Martin Parr and Nick Waplington. Out of the contemporary photographers, I would say Kate Geraghty, Phil Hillyard and Ashley Gilbertson.

**Charles Brewer, news.com.au picture editor and photographer, 2007–2012**

I get inspired by many different people. I spent nearly 10 years working in action sports (snowboarding, skiing, skateboarding) before



Above: Fugitive Malcolm Naden is pictured being led out of the Manning Base Hospital at Taree on the NSW mid north coast. PHOTO: DAN HIMBRECHTS/THE AUSTRALIAN

Below: A Sydney schoolgirl walks past a 5-metre statue of a woman in First Fleet Park. It was made from 24,000 artificial peaches as part of a campaign by cosmetics brand Ella Baché. PHOTO: CHARLES BREWER/COURTESY OF NEWS LTD

shooting news, and I still find the people shooting those sports are still pushing the boundaries of creativity – finding new ways to shoot something they've been shooting for years, reinventing. I find that in itself inspiring. I also get a lot of inspiration from users on Instagram – most of whom aren't professional photographers.

**Dan Himbrechts, freelance**

Websites like Tumblr and Flickr are a treasure trove of fresh ideas and originality. The tidal wave of user generated content and social media is a very healthy injection into photography. It cuts out the bull and gets to what's important. Photography can tempt you (as a photographer) into styles and techniques that distance you from what's important, the visual transmission of emotion and awareness. Like punk in the '70s, the rawness of social media imagery can occasionally take the piss out of the gimmicks you sometimes use to alleviate the boredom that can creep in when you shoot every day, day after day after day.

Similar to the introduction of the Kodak Brownie, the advent of the digital camera's rear viewing screen has given everyone unparalleled ability to experiment and turned learning curves skyward.

**Simon Schluter, photographer, *The Age***



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*At the heart of the image*



# A digital edge for photojournalism

Great multimedia depends on interesting stories, and now the sound is just as important as the pictures, says **John Donegan**. Cartoon by **Andrew Weldon**

Digital-only futures, convergence, fragmentation, paywalls – these are the buzzwords of 2012, throwing up many questions as to the future of journalists and journalism. Journalist-entrepreneurs, de-industrialisation, multitasking, start-ups, digital-enablers – these may be some of the answers.

And where do photographers fit into this? How do we adapt what we have done in the past? Is there an audience? Will that audience pay for our work?

As photographer Tom Griggs put it: "A definition of progress needs to be moved to a sense of a photographer's ability to present a fresh visual conversation flowing from the creative combination and balance of technology, form, content, context." And this fresh visual conversation can be delivered with stills-based multimedia.

Is there an audience? Simply, yes: 6000 photographs are uploaded every minute to Flickr. Flickr and Instagram have achieved unimagined success because people want to consume photography and photojournalism in numbers never before imagined.

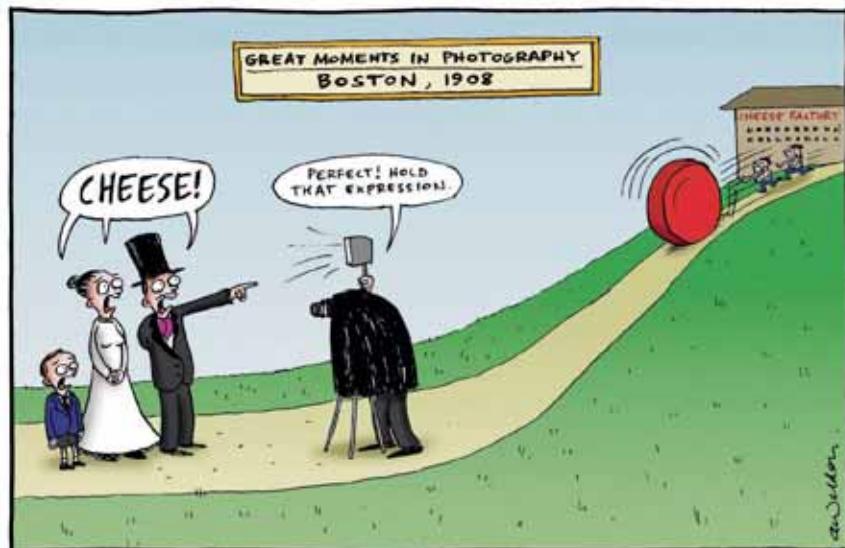
The first multimedia slide shows were produced for Australian newspapers a little over a decade ago. These early works were produced with analogue cameras on intricate software and published in a world where no social media tools existed to promote the work beyond the digital platform's readership. They were not only critically acclaimed, but also rated relatively highly in the hit counts because they provided a new experience that maximised the possibilities of a digital platform.

Then in 2005 Joe Weiss developed Soundslides – a simple (for the user) piece of software that revolutionised the press photographer's ability to quickly produce sound and stills multimedia. It coincided with the phenomenon of sharing content through social media, a shift which gives us access to a global audience of media consumers. People can surf on the waves of recommendation to original compelling content.

It doesn't matter if you use Soundslides, or an expensive and more flexible software like Final Cut Pro, or freeware like iMovie – producing original engaging content that the viewer can access in a byte-light format is the key.

What makes good stills-based multimedia? The story is always the starting point. Interesting stories told well are the core of all good journalism.

**"The audio reveals a lot more about the people and the places you are taking pictures of than the written word"**



Freelancer Chico Sanchez started producing multimedia in 2007 and is one of the best stills-based storytellers in the world. "The most valuable thing about multimedia is that it combines several formats to tell a story, so one learns several mediums for communicating," he says.

Creating a narrative with images is the beginning. Do 15 random pictures from an event constitute a narrative? No. You have to invite the reader into the world of the subject.

Using tried and tested means of visual storytelling, start with an establishing shot: wide views of the event or location. Then bring the viewer closer with mid-range angles, and follow with a close-up. Use visual variety to keep the viewer engaged and hold them for the duration of the piece.

Selection of the images – or more importantly, deleting images – is the hardest discipline in the process. Fifteen good pictures chosen to build a narrative are better than 20 random images that may be eye-candy but don't enhance the storytelling process.

While a simple way of producing multimedia is to lay music over a collection of pictures, the most compelling works have the narrative delivered by the subject, with ambient sounds from the location bedded under the interview.

I asked Chico Sanchez what he looked for. "The most important aspect of multimedia storytelling for me is sound. The voices of the people, and sounds of the places in my pictures tell the stories. If you take away the images, it's like a radio piece. The audio reveals a lot more about the people and the places you are taking pictures of than the written word," Sanchez explains.

Will the audience pay for our work? Yes. As long as we deliver interesting stories in a byte-light, platform-agnostic format.

We are no longer working in an old-fashioned world of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. As the industry changes to a digital-first model and newspaper companies become content delivery companies, these businesses are looking for lowest cost content to offset falling revenues. This will change depending on the success of paywalls, and the need for these companies to provide original, engaging content.

A freelancer needs to look at how to maximise sales not only of the original slideshow, but of the individual parts. Sanchez on-sells the individual images through his agent Aurora. And the ambient sound effects collected for each story can be on-sold through agencies such as audio stock.

Multimedia journalists should also look at a form of syndication of the slideshow. If you sell your work to an app-based, paywalled publisher in Australia, you should also reserve the right to sell the same story to app-based, paywalled publishers in the USA, Europe and Britain. While the internet is global, subscribers to these app-based, paywalled publications are usually bound by geography or nationality.

All these ideas can be viewed as a jumping-off point: rules that need to be broken so we can develop the storytelling experience for the benefit of the subject, the viewer, and the industry.

And the future? There is always a new aspect to explore. For Sanchez: "My next step is to learn to shoot video to mix with stills and audio."

**John Donegan** is a freelance photographer and multimedia producer; [www.1826media.com.au](http://www.1826media.com.au)

**Andrew Weldon** is a freelance cartoonist; [www.scratch.com.au/aweldon](http://www.scratch.com.au/aweldon)

# For today's photographers, the only way is app

**Brian Cassey** does more than upload pictures of kittens on Instagram – he uses it to build his brand as a photojournalist

**I**nstagram. The noise about it has been absolutely deafening since Apple voted the social media imaging app the 2011 iPhone App of the Year, and the phenomenon hasn't been out of the news much since. Facebook astonished the financial world by snapping up Instagram for a cool US\$1 billion in April this year.

In an imaging frenzy, well in excess of 40 million Instagram users worldwide upload photographs on a daily basis – of their dogs, girlfriends, babies, their travel snaps and even their lunch.

But Instagram, or IG, is more than just a way for Joe Public to share with their friends a filtered-to-death snap of a new kitten. It can be – and is – an important tool in a pro photojournalist's total social media armoury.

Photojournalists around the planet have embraced Instagram, including a who's who of Australia's press photographers. It's impossible to mention them all here, but they include past and present Walkley winners, World Press Photo recipients and many more who are considered masters of the newspaper photography craft.

There is no simple answer as to why this is the case. Each photographer has his or her particular reason for participating. Some see it as a cathartic pastime and a counterbalance to their usual rigidly styled daily newspaper photography. Some see it as just an image-based version of Facebook. To some it as an imaging challenge to see how much innovation and creativity they can milk out of an iPhone or Android device, and some see it as just a bit of fun. To many it's a combination of all these and more.

In my case, the answer is similarly complex. I initially resisted the push to join Instagram. Obviously I didn't understand it.

Tentatively you take a few iPhone images, play around a bit with some image manipulation apps and then upload to Instagram... and wait... then magically someone 'likes' your picture and you have a 'follower'.

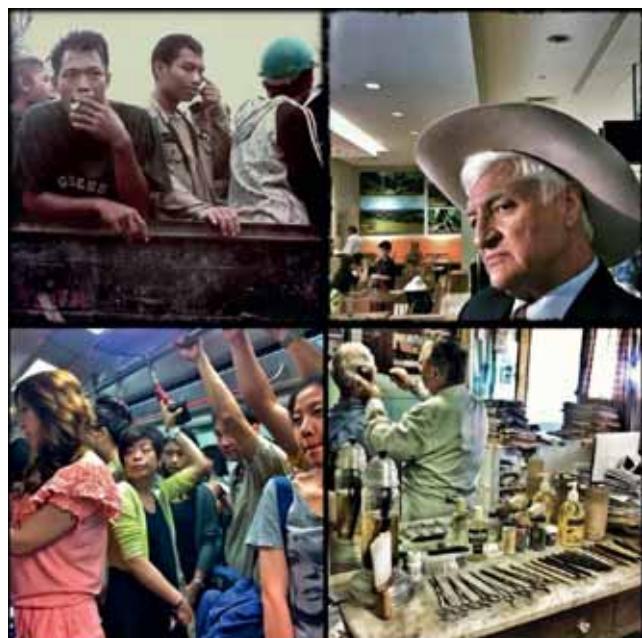
Yup, just such a silly little thing, but the addiction is almost instantaneous.

From that initial foray, and 400 IG pictures later, my followers have grown to a modest 400-odd – a mix of Australian and international photojournalists, a few non-photographer friends and complete strangers who appear, gratifyingly, to like the work.

Perhaps it is only after you've used Instagram for a while that the advantages of participation become more apparent.

I now interact with my fellow press photographers more than I ever did before. As I am based in far-flung Cairns in Australia's northern tropics, face-to-face contact with any of the southern media photographer pack is limited to quick visits to the Walkleys and other awards and exhibitions. Indeed I have never met many of Australia's photojournalists face to face, but I now engage in regular banter with them on Instagram.

Making an image on a camera phone worth uploading to Instagram and the scrutiny of your peers is also a rewarding challenge. Comments about your work from followers can be all of amusing, scathing, constructive, sarcastic, congratulatory or derisive. It does encourage you 'to see' a photograph again which, rightly or wrongly, is not always the case with daily newspaper work. Take it from me, Australia's media photographers are not shy with their appraisals, and competition is fierce.



## Brian's fave Instagram snappers

In no particular order:  
a baker's dozen, plus one

Mick Tsikas, @mickpix  
(Sydney, street photography)

August Liu, @giflzs (China, BW street images)

Nick Moir, @nampix  
(Sydney, dark, moody, street photography)  
meanwhile elsewhere, @\_meanwhile  
(Tajikistan, beautiful images)

Quentin Jones, @heycharger  
(Sydney, quirky, trolleys, couches, TVs)

Sam Mooy, @moypsics (Sydney, street photography, shadows, contrast)

Tracey Nearmy, @tracenarms  
(Sydney, street)

Chris McGrath, @cmac\_photo  
(Hong Kong, travel and street)

Steve Christo, @christo1966 (Sydney)

Grant Turner, @mediakoo  
(Sydney freelance, street, quirky)

Dean Lewins, @deanlewinsphoto  
(Sydney, AAP)

Craig Greenhill, @saltwaterimages  
(Sydney, Mr Saltwater)

Chris Scott, @chrisscottpix  
(Melbourne, freelance)

Cameron Spencer, @cjspencois (Sydney)

My apologies to all the talented photographers whom I have omitted due to lack of space.

**I have never met many of Australia's photojournalists face to face, but I now engage in regular banter with them on Instagram**

But as a freelance photojournalist in these uncertain times – with looming redundancies, shrinking newspapers (both in the number and the size of pages) and dwindling budgets – I feel the major advantage of Instagram is as a tool to help keep my name out there and contribute to building a "brand". I see branding as an essential survival tactic.

Let's face it – the industry climate means it's imperative to make every effort to keep our work, name and availability in the limelight. Instagram, as a social media tool used in concert with Twitter, Facebook, other social media and a web presence, has emerged as a frontrunner in the fight to achieve that end.

And yes, it's also a damn lot of fun!

**Brian Cassey** is a Walkley-winning freelance photojournalist based in Cairns, Qld, and a member of the photojournalist collective fotostrada. He has just published *Instagrammification*, a book of 80 of his Instagram images. Order it from [www.briancasseyphotographer.com/books.php](http://www.briancasseyphotographer.com/books.php)



# Media gets its mojo on

People everywhere are using mobile devices to tell their own stories, and the media industry is having to adapt. **Ivo Burum** explains this brave new world of mojo

Louis Kantilla from remote Bathurst Island is part of a new breed of digital storyteller – a mojo (mobile journalist), able to record, edit and upload stories from almost anywhere using only a smartphone. “Editing this stuff with this little gadget you can do it by your hands, maybe you can go out fishing and do editing while you throw [in] the line. You can do anything with this,” he says.

This new form of do-anything-from-anywhere mobile storytelling is part of a communications revolution. Author and media commentator Robert McChesney believes the combination of social media and powerful new technology has created a “critical juncture” that’s challenging existing communications institutions. It’s transforming people like Louis, who once were the audience, into producers of user generated content (UGC) for a new online news and information market.

The possibilities for a mobile-led communication revolution have never been greater. In the final quarter of 2011, more iPhones were sold than babies were born – an iPhone left an Apple retailer every 4.2 seconds compared to one baby born every 4.6 seconds. In 2012, Android mobile devices are outselling the iPhone two to one. In 30 of the top 60 mobile-using countries, there are more active mobiles than people.

With more than two billion smartphones now in use, each with more processing power than NASA had at its disposal when it landed a man on the moon, it’s no wonder that nearly 40 per cent of new mobile users are going mobile only.

These days the first person at a news scene will probably have a mobile device they’ll use to file a citizen witness report. But chances are, they won’t be a journalist. Internet critic Andrew Keen calls these citizens “amateur monkeys”, who in 2011 created a whopping 31 million hours of what he calls “gossip” – enough UGC to run 3500 channels 24/7 for a year.

But the journalism profession has been caught napping. With the number of citizens using mobiles online growing exponentially, mainstream media is only now beginning to teach its journalists the digital creation, aggregation and curating skills needed to sift through volumes of electronic online kludge.

It’s estimated that only 10 per cent of data on the internet is structured, or database driven. The other 90 per cent comprises



emails (500 billion per day), SMS (9.6 trillion messages in 2012), tweets (3000 per second), YouTube (72 hours of video uploaded every minute), Facebook (260 million people access Facebook via their mobile) and ad requests (over 400,000 every minute). As online communities find better ways to manage the volumes of online content, they will receive an even larger audience and a bigger slice of the advertising dollar pie.

At present, even though people spend 10 per cent of their media attention on mobiles, the mobile ad spend is still only 1 per cent of total ad spend. But with trends showing that 100 per cent of Japanese consumers who own mobiles make their first research for a purchase using their mobile, the advertising industry knows there is more mobile ad revenue to come.

These same mobile trends can be seen impacting the news business. With more people going online for their information, media companies are having to retool and reskill their workforce to capitalise on new online market opportunities. And even though large media organisations such as US newspaper publisher Gannett recently purchased 1200 iPhones for its journalists, in general, mainstream media has been slow to make the shift to mobile.

Ilicco Elia, head of mobile at UK advertising giant LBi, predicted the current trend almost a decade ago when he ran

Reuters mobile. Elia’s mojo project at Reuters enabled journalists to publish news stories from the field.

“The first reaction we got from the journalist is you want me to write, take photographs and interview someone, ask questions, take photos and video, so you are going to give me four times the salary... ‘no’. We said stick it in your back pocket and use it when you want to,” he recalls. “Without fail, after using the phone, journalists said ‘I get it now’.”

And today’s journalists get it as well. Recent mojo workshops I ran at *The Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) and at *Ekstra Bladet* (EB), Denmark’s largest tabloid, saw journalists and photographers take to mojo as if their jobs depended on it.

“Our editor wanted another angle on the ‘summer weather’ so we went straight away on a little iPhone mission,” says Dan Rasmussen a senior journalist with EB. He made his first completely shot and edited on the iPhone story only a day after our mojo workshop. “Baby steps... but very inspiring.”

Online editors such as Simon Morris from SMH want journalists to use mobiles to upload raw video footage, or simple witness mojo, to sit alongside their online print stories. “We want it low res, we want it when it happens and we want to be the first with it online.”

Heine Jorgensen, the online editor from EB, also sees the benefit of having

Brendan, a mojo in the Northern Territory trained by Burum, shows local kids how to do it.  
PHOTO: IVO BURUM

► journalists who remain in the field edit complete packages while they wait for the story to continue developing. "Sure, if they are on location and the story is breaking, they stay there. And we'd be mad not to take all they produce, raw footage and story."

I call this "real mojo". It involves more than uploading raw "accidental citizen witness footage" of riots to live websites like Bambuser, YouTube, or FTP (file transfer protocol) sites to be repackaged by news aggregators. It involves complete story creation, including an on-location edit, mix and upload using the mobile.

Smartphone accessibility is creating unprecedented opportunities for citizens like Louis, who live in remote communities, to engage in global conversations with, for example, the HuffPostLive. This is the Huffington Post's new streaming venture designed to capitalise on mobiles' anywhere, anytime capabilities.

Ahmed Shihab-Eldin, the new head of the HuffPostLive, believes that, "Truth, transparency and accountability should trump objectivity. The pursuit of as many angles and voices should replace this notion of getting one side's perspective and disregarding countless others. Yet while we welcome multiple views on an event, what's also needed is more than an accidental citizen witness view. Our segments will be as long or as short as they need to be to sustain the conversation," says Shihab-Eldin.

But whether the Huff's new venture evolves into a format that repackages

## "I look forward to Louis and citizen mojos delivering their own stories from dinghies in remote streams and big ponds globally"



disparate and life-changing social online witness *moments* into a longer narrative, one that's verified and structured, remains to be seen.

Alan Rusbridger, the editor of *The Guardian* in the UK, also believes accessing the "on the ground" mobile communicators is becoming more critical in the news business. He believes that to leave out the audience is to stop the story when it's possibly only beginning.

"We've moved from an era in which a reporter writes a story and goes home and that's the story written... the moment you press send on your story, the responses start coming in. And so I think journalists have to work out what to do about those responses... if you go along with open journalism, you're going to be open to other sources," he says.

One of those sources is primary and secondary schools that are embracing mojo practices across the curriculum. This is an example of Robert McChesney's "critical juncture" at work, creating the foundations of a new "communication system that will be a powerful impetus (for) a more egalitarian, humane, sustainable, and creative (self-governing) society."

Recently Jonathan Holmes, the host of ABC TV's *Media Watch*, wrote in *The Walkley*

*Magazine*, "the program scratches an itch that no-one else can reach." Probably true, especially with its current host.

But another way to scratch that itch might be to train young citizens to create and publish more representative stories, and in the principles of the fourth estate, even while still at school. Schools could achieve this by partnering with local media organisations in mojo type projects and training.

Whether it's a Twitter feed, a Facebook post, a video on YouTube, accidental citizen witnessing or citizen journalism, people with disabilities telling their own stories, or Indigenous people creating a less marginalised voice, mobiles are playing a greater role in changing the way we communicate.

Whether it's the Huffs' aggregated feed model, or Rusbridger's new "open journalism newsroom", the never-ending story created by millions of mobile contributors is challenging what news is, how and who makes it.

I look forward to the *Guardian*'s collective growing, to the HuffPostLive being a format that gives *citizen witnesses* an opportunity to become *citizen journalists*. I especially look forward to Louis and citizen mojos delivering their own stories from dinghies in remote streams and big ponds globally. Go mojo.

**Ivo Burum** is a journalist and former executive producer of factual for the ABC and was one of the pioneers of self-shot content creation in Australia, with series such as *Home Truths*, *Nurses* and *Race Around Oz*; [www.burummedia.com.au](http://www.burummedia.com.au)



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# In for the skill

**Ed Giles** has found producing multimedia photojournalism on assignment immensely satisfying, but it's not always easy

We were being led through quiet Turkish olive groves by a young fighter of the Free Syrian Army, somewhere close to the Syrian border. *The Australian's* Middle East correspondent, John Lyons, and I were looking for rebel camps just across the border in Syria, which were reportedly being supplied and assisted by Syrian refugees inside Turkey. I say "close to" the border, because neither of us was sure exactly when we might cross into Syria, a place that had become extremely dangerous for journalists.

My week's assignment was to cover the refugee flow into southern Turkey as people fled the increasingly violent conflict in Syria's north-western Idlib province, shooting photographs for *The Australian* newspaper and producing multimedia video for the paper's website and tablet edition.

It was late February, the week after the heavy shelling of the Syrian city of Homs by the Syrian military. Syrian forces were sweeping across Idlib province, brutally attacking rebel-held towns and shelling rebel positions right up to the border with Turkey. Only the day before, Free Syrian Army (FSA) commanders we interviewed inside Turkey had told us of Syrian forces shelling and attacking FSA positions in towns and forests that straddle the border itself.

"Here is Syria," our guide told us in Arabic as we walked downhill across a dirt trail used by the Turkish military for patrols. Both Lyons and I were on edge as we walked across the trail and into Syria on the thin forest track. We had decided that we should work quickly and get out.

Our guide soon brought us to a clearing where roughly 30 young men armed with Russian assault rifles and old shotguns sat around a fire. After a quick round of greetings, Lyons got to work interviewing the young FSA fighters and I began shooting enough photographs and video to produce our coverage of the story.

Our 30-minute self-imposed deadline with the group quickly came around as I pushed to photograph and record video of the rebel camp, the fortified positions and defensive improvised explosive devices the FSA men had placed around their position. In the edit, hours later back in Turkey, I found I had only just gotten across the line with the material I brought back, with

Syrian refugees destroy pictures of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and his allies in front of a refugee camp in the town of Yayladagi, Turkey, on the border with Syria, March 1, 2012. PHOTO: ED GILES.



**After a week on assignment, most of the photography and video work that I filed was from our very fast half-hour in the Free Syrian Army camp**

enough to provide the newspaper for print output and a strong multimedia edit for digital editions.

This assignment on the border between Turkey and Syria, probably more than any other I've completed in my last year in the Middle East, provides a good window into both the positives and negatives of producing multimedia photojournalism in the field.

Our week leading up to the 30 minutes with the FSA rebels had been spent working around refugee camps housing Syrians in Turkey, and with senior FSA figures in a safe house near the border developing the relationships we hoped would provide access to an actual operation by FSA fighters.

In other words, our production schedule was running at a fairly leisurely pace as we developed our view of the story. On our final day of shooting, FSA fighters were given the green light by our senior FSA contacts to guide us to the camps inside Syria and see how they were running supplies on Turkish soil and fortifying positions close to the border. After a week on assignment, most of the photography and video work that I filed to the desk back in Sydney was from our very fast half-hour in the FSA camp.

On a positive note, photojournalists producing multimedia content on assignment are given the opportunity to take on extra responsibility in the way a story is told. The photographer becomes videographer, producer and editor, gaining the opportunity to have a significant input on the journalism, the narrative direction of a story and the aesthetics of photographs and video in a final edit.

A multimedia shooter has more power than ever to 'write' the meaning of their images, losing the risk of captions being changed or modified by editors further down the line. This is especially true when working with agencies that distribute the photographer's work far and wide to news outlets that have no direct contact with the

shooter on the sharp end, and therefore may not accurately maintain the original written meaning of the work.

Multimedia photojournalism also presents extremely good value for news outlets, as one skilled multimedia shooter in the field can be tasked with bringing home stills for the paper and scripted, edited video packages featuring a correspondent's voiceover for digital platforms. Further, in such a new area of visual journalism the photographer has a huge creative opportunity in shooting and editing. In multimedia, very few concrete rules apply other than the application of an outlet's particular editorial values and, of course, adherence to the rules of play in producing compelling and ethical photojournalism.

The pitfalls, however, are many. A single operator working in multimedia is tasked with a significant amount of work, shooting stills and video, producing scripts and editing to file content on deadline. In slower moments, this is fine as the shooter can look for the "money shot" photographs and then move on to completing video overlay, pieces to camera by the writer and so on, changing formats as the story requires.

But when news happens and it all really hits the fan, or you're working in a situation where time is tight and a story is happening right in front of you, balancing the demands of multimedia news production can become a hard task.

Multimedia does provide new ground for photographers to "write" the story behind their pictures and be creative in their work, but it's very important to keep in mind the limitations of the format when working as a sole multimedia shooter.

**Ed Giles** is a Walkley-winning photojournalist and multimedia producer based in Cairo, Egypt. His work has appeared in *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine* and *The Guardian*, among others



# Forgotten in Egypt

While Australia's foreign minister was quick to intervene when lawyer Melinda Taylor was arrested in Libya, the reaction to Australian journalist **Austin Mackell's** arrest, interrogation and five-month legal limbo in Egypt has been very different

**O**ne night in Beirut, some time after the 2006 July-August war, I was telling my friend Nizar Ghanem at length about some brilliant idea I had to change the depressing situation in Lebanon. "No! No! No!" he interrupted me. I was missing the big picture. "Nothing will really change in the Arab world till it changes in Egypt. Look to Cairo, when Cairo rises, the Arabs will rise."

Nizar was the smartest guy I knew regarding the politics of his country and the region. Nizar was a rare breed. Most of my Arab friends were, to lesser or greater extents, Westernised. With Nizar there was something different. He was secular, progressive and fluent in English, but he was not Westernised.

None of this meant he shunned Western cultural influence, not even a little bit. The difference in his world view was summed up best in a story that he told me, and that I have retold many times since:

The staff of an Arab NGO attend a conference in Japan. As the final day ends the Japanese organisers say to their guests: "We must show you the city! We will go for dinner at a very traditional restaurant, then afterwards something of your choosing. What would you like?"

The Arabs say they want "Japanese music". But after dinner, at the bar, they see a drum kit and electric guitars on the stage. The band is playing rock'n'roll. Dismayed, they say to their hosts: "Oh no, you must take us to see Japanese music, this is Western! We are drowned in Western culture constantly!"

But the Japanese weren't drowning, they were swimming.

They replied: "Excuse us, but all the people in this bar except yourselves are Japanese. Those are Japanese people on stage, singing in Japanese. If you wanted to see traditional Japanese music, you should have said so."

The Japanese in this story have confidence in the strength of their own culture's ability to grow and change, a process that includes

adopting technologies and cultural forms from other societies, without losing its essential character.

Nizar was an Arab who had similar faith in his own culture to function as an equal to the West and other great world cultures. I would meet many more young Arabs like him over the years, with their roots deep in the rich soil of Arab and Islamic civilisation, and their branches reaching for a sky that is of no-one.

But whenever I met them, they seemed to feel that they were a scattered collection of individual deviants, not a cohesive community or latent political force.

Then all that changed. Egypt rose.

I missed Al Ayam, The Days, as they are simply called, between the initial uprising on January 25, 2011, or "Police Day" as it was designated by the regime, and February 11, when Mubarak was finally forced from office. Arriving later that February, however, I knew there was plenty more story yet to unfold.

My two main focuses have been basically consistent since my arrival. One was the imperial context of Egypt's politics, and the immense threat it poses to US hegemony in the region. This meant looking at the role of the Egyptian military, which receives US\$1.3 billion a year from the US (Hillary Clinton has even signed a special national security waiver, vetoing attempts by Congress to have this linked to democratic progress).

My other focus was the interwoven issues of poverty, class and Egypt's failed neo-liberal reforms. The chant was "Bread, freedom and social justice" in that order. Here the heroes of my stories were the brave workers who had faced up to torture and intimidation in their fight for unions independent of the state apparatus.

It was while attempting to report on the latter, in particular to interview Kamal el-Fayoumi, an independent union organiser from Mahalla, that on February 11 this year (exactly a year to the day after Mubarak was

forced from office), I was first mobbed and then arrested.

Also arrested were my translator Aliya, the taxi driver Zakaria, who we had hired for the two-hour drive to Mahalla from Cairo, and Derek, an American masters student with an interest in the union movement.

We were held for a total of 56 hours by police, state security and military intelligence, during which time we were driven hundreds of kilometres to be repeatedly interrogated.

We were also taken to the general prosecutor's office. Here Zakaria and Kamal, who had joined us at the first police station out of solidarity, knowing it would likely mean his own arrest (which it did), were reclassified as witnesses. Aliya, Derek and I were charged with inciting vandalism; it's alleged we promised to pay children if they threw stones at a police station. The charges, which are entirely and demonstrably false, carry a maximum sentence of seven years.

For nearly five months now we have been banned from leaving Egypt as the case is held over us, and we await a decision about whether to set a court date or "archive" the case. During this time the Media Alliance and the embassy staff have been of much assistance, and made strident efforts to have the issue resolved.

My impression, however, is that for whatever reason, both are being stonewalled by the Australian government just as much as by the Egyptians.

As the mask of transition drops away, and the attempt at a military coup becomes more desperate and brutal, the danger I and my colleagues face grows. I came here to report on the Egyptian struggle for human rights; now, my own rights are violated and my government is silent. As Egypt struggles to build its democracy, is ours eroding?

**Austin Mackell** is a freelance reporter whose work has appeared in *The Scotsman*, CBC, New Matilda and other outlets



Hordes of hardcore soccer fans, "Ultras", attack Cairo's Ministry of the Interior building in February this year.  
PHOTO AUSTIN MACKELL

**Here the heroes of my stories were the brave workers who had faced up to torture and intimidation in their fight for unions independent of the state apparatus**

# Queen of the spin kings

How much is WA's Government Media squad dictating the news, and how much are journalists to blame, asks **Kerry Faulkner**.

Cartoon by **Dean Alston**

With her trademark tight pants, long boots, big sunglasses and propensity to drop a swear word, the director of Western Australia's Government Media section, Dixie Marshall, looks more like a rock star than a top bureaucrat.

She surprised many with her enthusiastic embrace of the role in June last year, after more than 27 years as a journalist and newsreader at Nine.

Apart from providing a better pay packet, the move paves the way for her to follow in the footsteps of her father, Liberal politician Arthur Marshall, the state member for Dawesville between 1996 and 2005.

But just how much Marshall relished the job was illustrated by *The West Australian's* political editor, Gary Adshead, in his exposé "Sin of the spin's in the telling", published on April 19, 2012.

This quoted a November 2011 email from an unguarded Marshall to her 18-member team in Government Media, who directly service Western Australia's premier and state ministers.

Then five months into the job, Marshall wrote: "It is not a fluke we are on a roll ... remember this was always the plan ... fun frivolity with CHOGM ... followed by tough decisive announcements around law and order. As a media team we are being smart and disciplined."

She added: "This is all not happening by accident ... it is happening because we – our media team – is pulling together. That said it can all turn to s... in an instant so keep your wits about you."

Her email goes on to congratulate staff on successful drops to media here and there, a diversion in the house on the carbon tax, good talking points to backbenchers, and a quiet coffee with a senior commentator to plant some seeds.

The self-congratulations didn't sit all that well with some media observers, such as Curtin University's head of journalism, Dr Joseph Fernandez, who was left wondering about, among other things, the extent of Government Media's influence on the running of the WA government.

Not much of a tweeter normally, he couldn't resist a contribution to the twitter-sphere on the day of Adshead's opinion piece. "Life after journalism – pretty sad



what some get up to," he tweeted.

A former newspaper editor, he says too few people outside the media understand just how many obstacles journalists must overcome to do their job. Pressure to file many stories, tight deadlines, dwindling budgets and a plethora of secrecy laws all block the media's path.

The Government Media machine running defence for politicians is just another hurdle. But, Dr Fernandez says, if it is as efficient as Marshall claimed in her email, journalists share the blame.

"I am not putting all the blame on the spin machine and I want to make the point that journalists need to put up a stronger resistance," he says.

"Is the media being assertive enough, is it being enquiring enough, is it critical enough?

"And I must say it is, but only sporadically – I can't think of more than a dozen journalists in mainstream media who are consistently critical enough."

Premier Colin Barnett, in his Western Australia Day address published in *The West Australian* on June 2, 2012, complained that "changes in the media environment have spawned a political paradigm that rewards negativity."

He wrote: "While it is the duty of the media and the opposition to hold the government to account, the balance has shifted too far to the negative and it has shifted to a culture of constant attack."

Barnett's WA Day lament about his good news stories struggling to get exposure roughly coincided with the first anniversary of Marshall's appointment as director of the Government Media section. Importantly, it confirmed deep stresses in the crack media team Marshall had congratulated so heartily the previous November.

Media commentators are talking about press secretaries' deepening siege mentality and, as a result, the tap-tap of Marshall's stilettos is being heard more frequently in newsrooms as she descends to berate editors for negative reporting.

Journalists attempting to question ministers outside opportunities choreographed by "central command" (as Government Media is known) are berated. If they behave badly by asking tough questions at news conferences, minders whisk their politicians away.

Adshead says one of the premier's doorstops lasted just 26 seconds before he cut and ran.

But even when there are opportunities to question politicians at length at press conferences, many journalists are too busy tweeting to listen anyway. Adshead says the urgency to be the first with the news distracts reporters from deeper consideration of the issues.

Back at the WA Day address, Marshall explained that Premier Barnett's reference to changes in the "media environment" meant the emergence of the 24-hour news cycle which, she said, benefited the opposition because it allowed them to feed more bad news stories to news-hungry journalists.

But Marshall's reasoning is "fanciful logic" according to the opposition's media chief, Stephen Kaless, who describes being in opposition media as akin to being the lone guy in Tiananmen Square in 1989, trying to stop the tanks with his flag.

In April 2012 alone, Government Media released 107 press statements compared to the opposition's 40.

Kaless's bemusement at the idea that the state opposition benefits from a 24-hour news cycle is supported by figures which

► show the government had 265 ministerial and departmental media advisers in 2010 (figures from *The Sunday Times*, October 17, 2010). The opposition, in comparison, currently has three.

The central Government Media team, which looks after the premier and his ministers, on its own has 19 media advisers including Marshall.

As Seven's senior political reporter Geof Parry observes, fewer departments are responding directly to journalists' questions, with most deferring to their minister's office.

This gives rise to the question: What do the remaining 246 or so media officers in the government departments do?

Barnett revealed on radio recently that he was tiring of his tag of "emperor", even though it was given to him by some of his own backbenchers. But Adshead says that given Barnett's dismissive way of dealing with the media when he considered their issues irrelevant, the tag still suits.

Paul Murray, a senior Western Australian political commentator, talkback radio host and former editor of *The West Australian*, says feedback from his 6PR producers is that Marshall's central media team also shows a high degree of arrogance.

He says below the very top echelons of Government Media, officers are young, inexperienced and very defensive.

"We get, 'Oh that's not a story, what do you want to know about that for?' so it is a very defensive approach, which is pretty amusing since most of us have been in the

business about five times longer than any of the GMOs [government media officers] at this stage," he says.

Murray says that rather than being victims of the 24-hour news cycle, politicians are active participants in it, "feeding the chooks" by responding to the most banal questions, which they could reasonably let go to the keeper.

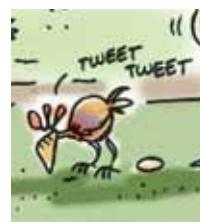
He says tight deadlines and budgets have become excuses for the death of journalistic questioning and too many reporters aim simply to get a response, rather than get to the truth. Settling for emailed answers from press secretaries, rather than conducting interviews with ministers, has become common practice.

"Presenting both conflicting views without an attempt to try and work out which one contains the truth, I don't think that is doing our jobs as journalists in representing the truth to the public," he says.

In the mid-1990s, as editor of *The West Australian*, Murray gave evidence to the Commission on Government investigating the politicisation of the Government Media Office of the time, which had been pinpointed as an issue of concern in the 1992 WA Royal Commission.

He told the inquiry that there was no culture of disclosure among press secretaries; rather, there was a culture designed to protect ministers.

Premier Colin Barnett officially abolished the Government Media Office soon after he came to power in 2008. But Murray says



little has changed since the mid-1990s.

One of the major recommendations of the Commission on Government Report in 1996 was for a specific code of practice for media secretaries to guide their behaviour and operating methods.

Further, it called for ethical standards for media secretaries where the principles of public interest, transparency and accountability were paramount.

Marshall confirms no such code of practice specifically for media secretaries exists.

She declined to be interviewed for this story, but answered selected questions when they were put in writing.

She refused to answer other questions, including if any of the Commission on Government's other 10 recommendations relating to the Government Media Office were adopted.

When asked those questions, the Public Sector Commission, Western Australia's public service integrity watchdog, referred them on to Government Media, where Marshall said she was having no further input into the story.

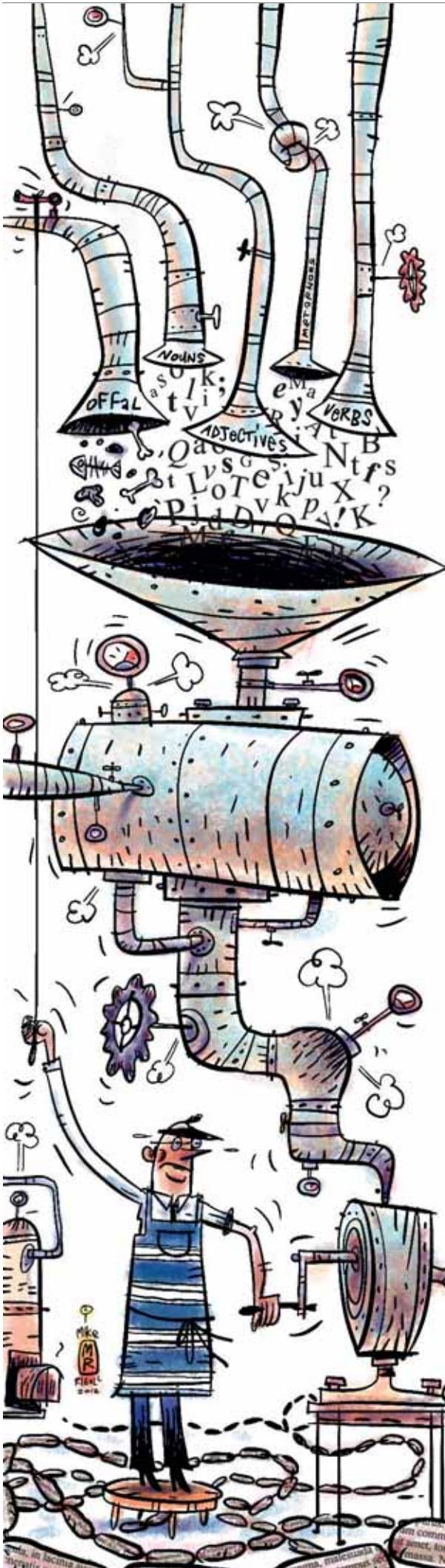
**Kerry Faulkner** is a freelance journalist who tutors in journalism at Curtin University and won a Perth Press Club Award in 2001; [faulknerjournalist.com](http://faulknerjournalist.com)

**Dean Alston** has been a cartoonist at *The West Australian* for 25 years and in this time has been awarded every major journalism award for cartoonists in Australia, including a Walkley Award for best cartoon

## Who doesn't love a young journalist?

Foxtel is proud to be the major sponsor of the Walkley Young Australian Journalist of the Year Awards. Congratulations to 2012 overall winner Jake Sturmer. Stay classy Jake.





# Freelancers on cheap street

Is good writing worth more than \$15 an hour? **Anna Kassulke** thinks so. Cartoon by **Mike Rigoll**

“Mercymathews” was recently rated the top earning freelance writer on freelance.com. Based in Bangalore, she charges US\$15 per hour. Mercy’s listed qualifications are brief: “certified SEO copywriter from SuccessWorks”.

Although you can upload résumés, Mercy hasn't. Neither has she uploaded a portfolio. But she has loads of testimonials, such as: "I am very satisfied with overall quality of the content provided and the fact that author followed very well my instructions." (One wonders how the instructions read.)

In a mushrooming digitalised international free market, anyone can claim to be a writer. In this climate, clients will grab the cheapest option, not necessarily the best. And many clients are clearly indifferent to the quality of the copy.

Hungry freelancers are often forced to bid for work and accept a pittance for their craft. But each time they do this they undervalue their profession. The current bidding market is hurling qualified copywriters back to the pre-union, pre-rights Dark Ages.

On another site, freelancer.com, most ads run along similar lines:

“Hello Freelancer.

My project is ongoing articles writing project. Article body words counting can vary from 150 to 500 words. My current rate is 1\$ per 500 words. Rate will be increasing as you be regular writer in my team ... New Freelancers are welcome to show their skill and earn unlimited/day".

The posting is dodgy in every respect:

1. It is very badly written (so how do they recognise good writing when they see it?).
2. There's a promise about becoming a regular (not).
3. They are asking for new (vulnerable) freelancers to hook in (don't get hooked).
4. Pay is \$1 for 500 words, compared with the Media Alliance's 2011 recommended rate of 91c per word.

Freelance writing sausage factories such as Elance, WriterFind and Freelancer should be

treated with caution: they deprive freelancers and clients of what they deserve.

If writers have qualifications, experience and a good portfolio they should be paid for them; these things are valuable in the current copy-hungry world. But this is something we can forget. What is more, offering cheap services will not pay admin and office expenses, superannuation, insurance or holidays.

So how can freelancers promote themselves and their professionalism, as well as educate potential clients about the downside of hiring the Mercymathews of this world? It comes down to how we value our work and being consistent in saying no to exploitative clients.

If the majority of freelance writers refuse poorly paid projects they will also be promoting ethical standards. Then we could start regaining the ground that is rapidly slipping away. It may be a slow process, but the profession needs to come back to a lucrative and valued future.

It is possible to stand your ground and make a point about professionalism. I was between jobs, that time when you wait for the outcome of a quote. So I cold called a Sydney real estate agency about copywriting for them. I was given a writing test to complete to a deadline and a rough idea of pay. A subsequent email informed me I had to make myself available every day during the week.

I had no guarantee of work, the pay was less than half that offered by other real estate companies I have worked with and I was expected to drop everything for them. These shameless conditions made me seethe.

I decided to speak up via email, because I was

incapable of speech. Their reply was:  
“In the absence of national salary benchmark

and other relevant data, it may be wise to keep opinions gathered through personal experience to yourself. For your information, we have two experienced copywriters... happily working on these rates. The rates are very much in line with industry standards.”

► I didn't keep my opinions to myself. I told them categorically that companies like theirs will get less – poor English, poor grammar and copy that lacks vim. It is not just about saving on pay, it is about valuing professional output, too.

When a "Hello Freelancer" tells you there are other writers working for less, tell them politely that you charge according to the value you add, based on your qualifications and experience. You will be helping yourself and the integrity of the industry, as well as other freelancers.

If you must write articles for bidding sites, ignore the lower bids and stand firm on quality and recommended rates of pay. And don't fork out any money for "membership" unless an organisation is reputable and gets you the work you want. Membership rates can be as much as \$47.60 per month. Join the sites but keep researching more lucrative, ethical markets.

Mercymathews has a very elusive online presence. In a way it is hardly surprising – could she stand up to scrutiny? If you create a professional online presence for yourself through a website or blog, you can promote excellence and professional rates as well as changing the way clients think. Showcase your best samples of work and list your



## The current bidding market is hurling qualified copywriters back to the pre-union, pre-rights Dark Ages

qualifications. Update your blog regularly so potential clients can tell you are a good and committed writer, and that you do not shy away from scrutiny.

Together, freelancers and their organising bodies must try to maintain and negotiate for high standards. Join the Media Alliance and professional writing associations – the Australian Society of Authors, the Australian Writers' Guild, writing groups, and network with other writers. Discuss rates with other freelancers. As the writers for *Offpress* (the Queensland Society of Editors) suggest: "Don't be modest. Knowing someone else who charges higher fees can provide incentive and encouragement to others to raise their rates, and this is likely to have a flow-on effect."

Charge what you deserve for quality copy. It will keep you, and other Australian freelance writers, well fed and suitably recognised.

**Anna Kassulke** is a freelance copywriter and writing consultant. Her writing appears in all sorts of nooks and crannies around Australia, the UK, Dubai, Florida and other far-flung places

**Mike Rigoll** is a freelance illustrator based in Perth



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# Muslims and the mainstream: bridging the divide

When **Agnes Cusack** helped organise a weekend meeting between young Muslims and the media, it was a door opener for both sides

**A**sk a bunch of smart, young Muslims if the media coverage of their community is based on fact, and they will answer with a resounding “No”.

Over a weekend in early May, 60 young Muslim men and women, selected on the basis of their interest in the media, met with 30 journalists at the Melbourne Town Hall to discuss the reporting of their community in the mainstream media.

The Media and Young Muslim Conference, organised by the Multicultural Media Exchange, included forums, small group discussions and practical workshops on interviewing and dealing with a public relations disaster.

Rohan Wenn, the national communications director of GetUp!, said the conference signalled a changing of the guard in the Muslim community. “The young people seemed to understand they have a lot more control over how they are portrayed. They also seemed keen to work on the skills they need to do this.”

The Multicultural Media Exchange works to build media skills in people from refugee and migrant communities, and set out to convince young Muslims to engage with the media. It’s a message that appears to have hit home. “I found out that journalists work with very demanding deadlines and the onus is really up to the Muslim community to seek them out in order to inject balance into the reporting,” was a typical response.

Negative media stereotyping of Muslims was a major issue for the young people. However, some acknowledged that stereotyping was a two-way-street. “The media aren’t a homogenous group you can stereotype, just like Muslims aren’t.”

The young people showed remarkable insight into how negative media coverage forced Muslims to confront difficult issues. While some said it had galvanised them into action to improve perceptions of their community, others felt they were part of a “tug of war” between old and new Muslim identities.

George Negus told those taking part: “Probably it is a young person’s battle that you’re fighting... on behalf of the rest of the community, because – rightly or wrongly – Australians will take more notice of somebody who was born here than somebody who wasn’t.”



**“I found out that journalists work with very demanding deadlines and the onus is really up to the Muslim community to seek them out in order to inject balance into the reporting”**

Participants from The Media and Young Muslim Conference showed remarkable insight on the day.  
PHOTO AGNES CUSACK

Given the Australian community’s negative attitudes towards Muslims in the past few years, skills training was an important component of the weekend. Media trainer Lina Caneva found herself teaching interview techniques to young people from the Middle East, Europe, Asia and Africa. “I gained an understanding of the diversity within the Muslim community... this is a topic (in all its forms) that will only continue to grow. Education is the key,” she says.

Young Muslim women talked to journalists about racist attacks that had followed negative reporting of the Muslim community. Sarah Malik, a journalist with AAP who is also a Muslim said, “Continued dialogue will make journalists more aware and the Muslim community feel more empowered in dealing with media.”

Bill Birnbauer, from Monash University, joined with Melissa Fyfe, an investigative reporter with *The Age*, in explaining how newsrooms work. Denis Muller, from the Centre for Advanced Journalism at the University of Melbourne, spoke about

media ethics. They helped to change some attitudes.

“I came to this conference thinking media is the cause of most of society’s problems; however this conference has opened my mind and given me more insight into the way media operates,” one attendee responded.

The *Herald Sun*’s John Masanauskas was a prime target for those angry about media representation of Muslims. He was part of a Sunday morning panel including journalist-author Cameron Forbes, former television journalist and academic Jill Singer, Nine Network’s Brett McLeod and Fairfax Community newspaper editor David Bonnici.

Masanauskas explained that newspapers were obliged to report both sides of the story and that it was not his job to take sides in a debate. He also said: “This engagement with young Muslims will influence my story selection and how I portray Muslims. This type of event has a big role to play in fostering understanding between journalists and Muslims.”

Brett McLeod described the discussion as a “door opener”, saying, “It was valuable to hear the views... in particular, the sense of grievance over the way Muslims are represented in the community, as well as some of the understanding – and misunderstanding – of how journalists work in practice.”

The conference ended with the young Muslims promising to develop links with journalists and the reporters asking for similar sessions with various other minority communities.

Larry Schwartz, a former Fairfax journalist and now freelance writer who tutors at Monash, summed it up this way: “It reminded me that we need to think outside the narrow sense of particular groups and at the attitudes and anxieties in the broader community that shape media response. It would be interesting to look at broadening the conversation to look at other minorities and the media.”

**Agnes Cusack** is a journalist and director of Multicultural Media Exchange in Melbourne; Twitter: @agnescusack. The conference was supported by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship in Melbourne and the ACT

# Getting digital right

Journalists are adapting to online; perhaps it's time the Walkleys did, too. **Penny O'Donnell, Jonathan Este and David McKnight** outline their argument. Cartoon by **Oslo Davis**

**T**here were two highlights for online journalism in the 2011 Walkley Awards. First, "Beating the odds", an ABC News Online investigation of Mount Druitt's disadvantaged children, won the award for online journalism. The judges described it as "a stunning piece of work" that left viewers feeling "empathy" for the community and its issues.

More significantly, WikiLeaks won the prize for most outstanding contribution to journalism. The Walkley trustees were impressed by its clever use of new technology to support whistleblowers exposing official secrets, and its courageous commitment to the journalistic tradition of seeking justice through transparency.

What, then, was the low point? Online journalists came away with *none* of the 12 Walkley prizes awarded in the All Media category. Instead, print journalists won seven prizes, including best sustained coverage of an issue, and television journalists won five, with the best scoop of the year going to Ten News for the "Skype scandal" story concerning the Australian Defence Force Academy.

The irony here is that the two named awards – "best scoop of the year" and "outstanding continuous coverage of an issue or event" – were introduced following the 2009 review of the prizes to give online journalists more opportunities to showcase their particular expertise (see [www.walkleys.com/walkley-review](http://www.walkleys.com/walkley-review)).

There is another reason why the 2011 Walkley outcome was surprising. Digital media played a huge role in news gathering and dissemination last year, from natural disasters in Australia and overseas to the Arab uprisings and the Qantas decision to ground its fleet.

The 2009 review also said that all-media awards recognising skills and values fundamental to the craft of journalism should replace platform-based awards (eg print, radio, television). This means a major restructure of the awards; current industry trends suggest it may need to happen soon.

## Internet as just another platform?

Online journalists come off badly when they compete directly with print and broadcast journalists. There has been only one outright online winner in any all-media category in the past five years, a HeraldSun.com.au team in 2009 for outstanding continuous coverage of the Black Saturday bushfires.

The Gold Walkley has yet to be awarded to an online journalist.

In fact, online journalists have won only a dozen prizes since online journalism was included in the Walkley Awards in 1997. Since then, seven of the winners were working at major newspapers (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and the *Herald Sun*), a tally that reminds us that a lot of online content is re-versioned print journalism.

Online journalism entries are judged by the same 11 criteria as other awards. They must demonstrate original, courageous and ethical journalism practice. Techniques such as live interaction, multimedia storytelling and crowdsourcing are encouraged. However, this is the only award category that specifically mentions the need to "showcase, benchmark and promote professionalism". This points to concerns that digital media have a downward pressure on news quality, and corrode journalism standards.

In short, either online journalism in Australia is performing badly or the existing award categories and criteria simply do not recognise its particular attributes.

## Rewarding excellence in digital journalism

Online journalism's ambiguous status within the Walkley Awards system needs to change. The problem, arguably, lies in treating the internet as just another publishing platform. As well, there is a strong view that online journalism should more correctly be termed "digital journalism".

One strategy the Walkley Foundation might consider is to open a dialogue with journalists from news websites – for example, Crikey, mUMBRELLA, Business Spectator, Global Mail, Inside Story, The Conversation and New Matilda – about digital journalism standards.

The Foundation might also look at the US-based Online News Association's (ONA) award system as a model. The ONA gives prizes in 13 categories, including innovative investigative journalism, non-English online journalism, data visualisation, community collaboration, technical innovation in the service of digital journalism, and blogging.

David Craig's recent book, *Excellence in Online Journalism* (Sage Publications, RRP US\$45), commends the ONA approach. He argues there are four key features of quality online journalism that deserve to be reflected in awards: speed and accuracy with depth in breaking news; comprehensiveness in content; open-endedness in story development; and the central place of conversation.

Craig says that these features marry print journalism traditions with evolving digital



journalism practices. He argues the discussion of excellence in online journalism benefits from an ethical framework that specifies the purpose or rationale for good practice.

He also defines journalism as a social practice (rather than an individual enterprise), which enables democracy by providing citizens with the information they need. In sum, he argues that journalists who are interested in excellence need to pay more attention to these particular features of online journalism.

In light of this analysis, the Walkley Award criteria for judging excellence in journalism might usefully be extended to include two more benchmarks: first, scope/depth of coverage, and second, public/community interaction.

Four new prize categories might be:

- Excellence in breaking news with speed, accuracy and in-depth coverage using multiple elements (eg, text, image, audio, video, interaction, links) for publication on multiple platforms.
- Excellence in experimental multimedia storytelling.
- Excellence in leading and moderating online conversations that include public contributions.
- Excellence in web-only independent and community journalism online.

It might also be time to offer separate prizes for online stories published on major and small websites (specified in terms of monthly unique visitors).

Alternatively, the Walkley Foundation might decide to move away from platform-based awards altogether. This would mean all-media awards recognising professional skills and values for every category.

**Penny O'Donnell, Jonathan Este and David McKnight** are part of a research project sponsored by the Australian Research Council and the Walkley Foundation on the future of newspapers

**Oslo Davis** is a Melbourne-based illustrator and cartoonist



# WALKLEY AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

2012

## A capital idea

**J**ournalism plays a vital part in the political process. The Media Alliance's Code of Ethics sums it up well when it says a key aspect of the journalist's role is to "inform citizens and animate democracy".

Journalists have a responsibility to provide voters with the information they need to make proper judgments at election time. It's also part of our job to transmit signals from the electorate clearly and accurately to politicians. And we have an obligation to hold to account those in positions of political power.

So it's appropriate that this year the Walkleys are going into the political equivalent of the lions' den. The awards presentation and gala dinner will be held at Parliament House in Canberra on Friday, November 30.

The annual Walkley Media Conference, being held on November 29 and 30 before the awards, will be called *What's the Story: Capital Edition*. The two-day program will include panel discussions, debates and presentations from both Australian and international experts, and leaders and legends of all forms of journalism.

The 2012 Walkley Awards will kick off a year-long program of events marking the centenary of the national capital in 2013. Importantly, it will be a recognition of the importance of journalism in Australia's political history.

Given the challenges now facing the media in this country, it has never been more necessary to recognise, reward and showcase excellence in our industry. It's time to start selecting your best work for entry.

The Walkley Foundation aims to encourage the consumption of professionally produced journalism by readers, viewers and listeners. In a rapidly changing industry, we particularly want to emphasise innovative techniques in news gathering.

Many Walkley categories, but particularly the "online" category, should encourage professional journalists to produce highly differentiated, boundary-pushing digital storytelling. We are looking for journalists who have created made-for-the-medium



digital journalism rather than merely publishing online.

In 2012 we have made a few tweaks to reflect this, replacing the "Best online journalism" award with the "Best digital journalism" award.

Another change has been to clarify and broaden the All Media category. Digital entries can be submitted under the All Media category along with photography, print, radio, television. We have moved three awards – for artwork, cartoon and three headings – into the All Media category to reflect the diverse platforms on which journalism is now being delivered.

There will be a major review of all award categories in 2013.

The entry system is almost identical to last year's, with entries to most categories requiring completion of both an online application and submission of four hard copies of the work. Entries to a number of award categories can be made entirely online. These are All Media: Best cartoon, All Media: Best artwork, and all of the Nikon-Walkley photographic award categories.

Entries close on Friday, August 31 at 5pm. On behalf of the small but dedicated and hard-working Walkley Foundation team, I ask you to submit your entries sooner rather than later.

Good luck!

**Laurie Oakes**  
Chair, Walkley Advisory Board

### 2012 WALKLEY CATEGORIES

#### LONG-FORM JOURNALISM

- Walkley book award
- Walkley documentary award

#### PRINT WIRE SERVICE AND DIGITAL JOURNALISM

- Best news report
- Best newspaper feature writing
- Best magazine feature writing

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

- Best news photography
- Best daily life/feature photography
- Best sports photography
- Photographic essay
- Nikon-Walkley press photographer of the year

#### NIKON-WALKLEY PHOTOGRAPHIC PRIZE

- Best community and regional photography
- Best portrait photography

#### RADIO JOURNALISM

- Best news and current affairs journalism
- Best feature, documentary or broadcast special

#### TELEVISION JOURNALISM

- Best news reporting
- Best news and current affairs reporting (less than 20 minutes)
- Best current affairs, feature or special (more than 20 minutes)

#### DIGITAL JOURNALISM

- Best digital journalism

#### ALL MEDIA

- Sustained coverage of an issue or event
- Best scoop of the year
- Best coverage of community and regional affairs
- Best international journalism
- Best business journalism
- Best investigative journalism
- Best coverage of Indigenous affairs
- Best sports journalism
- Best social equity journalism
- Best commentary, analysis, opinion and critique
- Best broadcast and online interviewing
- Best broadcast camerawork
- Best three headings
- Best artwork – including digital photo illustration and information graphics
- Best cartoon

The following Walkley Awards are not nominated categories, but are presented at the Walkley Awards Gala Ceremony:

- Most outstanding contribution to journalism
- Journalism leadership
- Gold Walkley



# Walkley categories explained

For complete category descriptions, and to register your entries, go to [walkleys.com](http://walkleys.com)

In all cases, "report" refers to either a single report or a collection of reports/coverage of an event, subject or issue, although entrants are limited to submitting not more than three pieces of work per category. Publication/broadcast must have been in the 12 months between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012. Only one entry per category is allowed. To register online or for more information on specific categories, entry requirements, group entry guidelines and frequently asked questions, visit [walkleys.com](http://walkleys.com).

## MAJOR CATEGORIES

The Walkleys recognise excellence for senior journalists in the following categories:

**Outstanding contribution to journalism:** Each year, the Walkley trustees recognise the achievements of someone who has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the highest standards of journalism – truth, rigour, integrity, fairness – over a lifetime. Nominations can be made through state branches of the Alliance or directly in writing to the Walkley Foundation Trustees, 245 Chalmers Street, Redfern NSW 2016.

**Journalism leadership:** In recognition of outstanding acts of courage and integrity in the practice of journalism. Persons wishing to nominate cases should write to the Chairman of the Board, c/- The Walkley Foundation. Nominations could include examples of previous work, citations from senior media and other personal references.

**Gold Walkley:** The Walkley Advisory Board chooses the winner of the Gold Walkley from among the winners of all other categories, except the "Journalism leadership" and "Outstanding contribution to journalism" awards.

## LONG-FORM JOURNALISM

**Walkley book award:** The Walkley book award specifically recognises journalism in book form and is open to all examples of journalistic non-fiction works by Australian writers. Entries may cover a diversity of issues, from true crime and biographies through to political analysis, business, war reportage, investigative journalism and foreign correspondence, for example. Authors must be Australian citizens or residents of Australia. Titles can be an edited collection by no more than five authors, can be on an Australian or international subject matter and/or historical in context. Entrants must submit the Walkley book award entry form.

**The Walkley documentary award:** The Walkley documentary award will recognise excellence in documentary production that is grounded in the principles of journalism – accuracy, impact, public benefit, ethics, creativity, research and reporting – together with rigorous film-making. The award is open to a variety of documentary storytelling styles and the judges will be looking for courage and creativity in concept, approach and execution. Documentaries may encompass an in-depth examination of issues of local, national or international importance, or of contemporary or historic events, and may include investigative, biographical and first-person stories that reflect the emotion and drama of the human experience.

**Eligibility:** any non-fiction film made for cinema, broadcast or web release with a running time of at least 40 minutes, NOT including entirely scripted or improvised fictionalisations of actual events.

## PRINT WIRE SERVICE AND DIGITAL JOURNALISM

**News report:** In this category, up to THREE related news items may be entered. Judges are particularly looking for courageous journalism, as well as writing excellence, accuracy, storytelling, newsworthiness, ethics, research, impact and public benefit.

**Newspaper feature writing:** Keeping in mind the parameters of the medium, creativity, originality and writing flair will be highly regarded in this category, in addition to the general criteria.

**Magazine feature writing:** Keeping in mind the parameters of the medium, creativity, originality and writing flair will be highly regarded in this category, in addition to the general criteria.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

The entry system for photography category awards can be found at Walkleys.com. All photographers may also enter the relevant All Media category, eg, "International journalism", but entry into any All Media category must be done on the Walkley entry website.

**News photography:** Newsworthiness, impact, technical superiority, creativity and originality will be looked at in this category. This category incorporates the previous categories of spot and general news, but still includes the criteria of capturing an exclusive or spontaneous news moment and depicting news-value images on the day. Up to five images on one subject, story or event (not theme) may be entered.

**Daily life/feature photography:** Images submitted for feature or magazine purposes. Ideally, they should be human-interest photos displaying creativity, originality and technical photographic excellence.

**Sports:** This category will reward those who capture the emotion and drama of sport. Entries may show action and/or feature imagery in the sporting arena. Will be judged on an entry of up to five images on one subject, story or event (not theme)

**Photographic essay:** Up to 12 images of a news or feature story, of which one photograph must have been published.

**Nikon-Walkley press photographer of the year:** Entrants must submit a body of work of six to eight images showing the photographer's range and self-editing skill. Body of work can encompass any genre.

**Nikon-Walkley prize for portrait photography:** Recognising excellence in portraiture, photographers can enter a single image for this Nikon-Walkley prize.

**Nikon-Walkley prize for community/regional photography:** Celebrating the best work of photographers working in regional and community media, entries for this Nikon-Walkley prize can comprise up to five images.

**Nikon-Walkley photographic prizes:** Nikon-Walkley prizes are awarded before the Walkley Awards Gala Ceremony. Winners receive a prize from Nikon, and their work is showcased in the Nikon-Walkley Press Photography Finalists exhibition. Images entered in Nikon-Walkley prizes can also be entered in other photographic and relevant All Media categories.

## RADIO JOURNALISM

In radio, judges will take into account the resources available for the preparation of the work entered and the collaborative nature of this medium.

**News and current affairs reporting:** The criteria are newsworthiness, courage, impact, immediacy and making use of the qualities of

For complete category descriptions, and to register your entries, go to [walkleys.com](http://walkleys.com)

the medium in reporting news and pursuing excellence in journalism. High regard will be paid to research, writing, production, incisiveness, impact, the public benefit and journalistic ethics.

**Feature, documentary or broadcast special:** Here, radio journalists have the time to research and explore news issues and current affairs in a longer format.

## TELEVISION JOURNALISM

In television, judges will take into account the resources available for the preparation of the work entered, and the collaborative nature of this medium.

**News reporting:** In particular, the judges will reward reports demonstrating newsworthiness, courage, impact, incisiveness, public benefit and ethics. Entries in this category may be a single short news report or no more than three related reports on the same subject.

**Current affairs reporting (less than 20 minutes):** This category was created to recognise daily current affairs and analysis of news events. Reports should highlight research, public benefit, ethics, courage and impact.

**Current affairs report, feature or special (more than 20 minutes):** This category will recognise excellence in long-form current affairs, highlighting research, impact, storytelling and public impact.

## DIGITAL JOURNALISM

**Best digital journalism:** This category was created to showcase, benchmark and promote the professionalism of online journalism. It recognises original, courageous and ethical journalism in the evolving online field. The judges will also take into consideration innovative techniques in news gathering and presentation including interactives, multimedia, audio, video, animation and live interaction, crowd-sourcing and modes of distribution.

## ALL MEDIA

The All Media awards recognise all forms of media, including photography, print news and features, radio and television news, artwork and cartoon and digital and/or a collaborative effort by a group or team of journalists or a media organisation.

**Sustained coverage of an issue or event:** This category rewards tenacity and creativity in sustained coverage of an issue or event over time but the entry must consist of work during the current Walkley period of entry. Each entry should include the initial story and up to four subsequent stories over the course of days, weeks or months. The progression of the initial developing story should be apparent from the follow-up coverage. Each entry must be accompanied by a supporting statement of up to 400 words. Details should include the story's chronology and circumstances affecting its gathering and presentation as well as resources available. It should recognise innovation and creativity, and the use of new technology and either single or multi platforms in the presentation of news and information. It can include an entire media organisation or individuals working across a range of platforms. Access to any online entries must be available during August to November 2012.

**Scoop of the year:** This award seeks to recognise the journalistic resourcefulness applied to breaking news. A scoop is defined as a report which contains revelatory facts which inform and change public

understanding or knowledge of an issue or event. The judges will be looking for a significant revelation, with public impact. It will display the skill of the journalist in getting the information and having it published or broadcast, and the degree of difficulty in so doing. Supporting documentation should include a chronology and must include and document the exact moment of broadcast or publication.

**Business journalism:** This award recognises excellence in business, economics and finance journalism.

**Broadcast camerawork:** This category has been expanded to include photographers working on online video and soundslides. This category still recognises camera work in Australian news, current affairs and documentary.

**Coverage of community and regional affairs:** This category is open only to journalists working in the suburban or regional media and recognises their role in reporting on and informing their local communities.

**International journalism:** This award recognises excellence in international journalism in the Australian media.

**Investigative journalism:** Recognising its valuable role, this category will reward well-researched and presented investigations.

**Coverage of Indigenous affairs:** This award recognises excellence in coverage of Indigenous issues. Journalists and photographers working in both the Indigenous and mainstream media are encouraged to enter.

**Sports reporting:** A story or series of stories on a sporting issue. Judges are looking for impact, newsworthiness and will reward ethics, creativity and application of the story to the sporting media. Analysis, breaking investigations and comment can also be considered.

**Social equity journalism:** This award recognises the vital role of public service journalism and media reporting which addresses issues relating to social and economic equality, human rights and participatory democracy. The award will be given to journalism that measures business, governmental and social affairs against clear ideals of the common good.

**Commentary, analysis, opinion and critique:** This category is open to those journalists involved in comment and analysis and includes leader writers, reviewers and opinion columnists covering arts, sports, business or politics. Entrants should submit three samples, not necessarily related, to be judged as indicative of their work.

**Broadcast and online interviewing:** Based on three samples indicative of an entrant's work, this category will be awarded to consistently good journalism in either radio, television or online. Judges will be looking for excellence in interviewing, both live and pre-recorded, and/or hosting live broadcasts.

**Three headings:** Subeditors can enter their three best headlines. Judges will be looking for originality, flair and the headline's relevance to the story it heads.

**Artwork:** The artwork category has expanded. Judges will be looking for artwork, illustrations, digital photo illustrations or information graphics displaying creativity, innovation and style, combined with artistic technique.

**Cartoon:** Creativity, innovation, wit and style will ideally combine with newsworthiness and artistic technique for the winner of the best cartoon award.



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# In their own words...

**Andrew Gregory** asks our Walkley Young Journalist of the Year winners about their work

## ■ Overall Winner + Television: Jake Sturmer, ABC TV

### Why did you decide to become a journalist?

There was no one point where I decided that journalism was for me. I think it came down to the fact that I'm a naturally curious person with a short attention span. When one of my lecturers told me that journalism was knowing a little about a lot of things, that was the point I decided that I'd made the right choice.

### What draws you to television journalism over other formats?

At the ABC I have the opportunity to work across most platforms – radio, online or TV. I find television journalism – particularly television current affairs – allows you to create an engaging narrative that makes for compelling viewing. If it's done well, television journalism can draw people in and truly capture their imagination. Being able to see facial expressions and reactions adds another level to the story. The combination of pictures, music, natural sound and visual treatments can work to make good journalism

into great stories. While other broadcast media such as radio and TV news inevitably contain some of those elements that make good television, longer form current affairs combines it all in a slick package.

### What can young journalists offer to TV newsrooms?

A fresh and wide-eyed approach. Young journalists generally aren't as set in their ways and are able to approach situations with unique perspectives. Their opinions may not always be appropriate, but creativity and a willingness to try something are two skills that are invaluable. Another thing young journalists (generally) understand is technology, which is a great enabler in news environments. Young journalists are keen to embrace new technologies and understand how they can be used to improve news output/quality.

### What does it take to be a great TV journalist?

First and foremost, the ability to find a good story. Without a good story to tell, you're hindered from the beginning. A mentor once said it's about making the important, interesting – not making



Jake Sturmer (right) with Tom Nicol from Sky News

the interesting seem important. From there it's about having an understanding of the elements that make a good story and using them in a way that conveys the mood and feel of the tale you're trying to tell.

I think great television is about telling a story that unfolds before you,

and engages people in a lasting way. I can still remember the great stories from journalists like Chris Masters, Paul Barry or Matthew Carney because they don't just inform and provide an understanding, they leave an almost indelible impression.

# The Newsbreakers



**sky NEWS**  
Australia's News Channels

NATIONAL CH 601

LOCAL CH 600

BUSINESS CH 602

A-PAC CH 648

■ **Photography: Jason Edwards  
Leader Community Newspapers**



**Why is it important for today's young journalists to have multiple media skills?**

Print media has irreversibly

changed, and it's been happening for some time. I took a look at myself and what emotionally affects, motivates and inspires me. I found it was the stories that were told with multiple layers of imagery, voice and music. Realising this made me want to tell my own stories in a method more than just still images and words, so I began the learning process all over again and delved into the world of multimedia.

You will never have a media home page on an iPad with 10 videos playing simultaneously so I still passionately feel the ability to produce a moving, dynamic and engaging photograph is as important as ever. It's just now the story needs to be told in a more engaging and entertaining method.

The one fear I have in the wake of all this, is a loss of quality. Too many editors are sending journalists untrained in the art of video into the field to bring back short grabs to accompany the online versions. It's devaluing the whole reason

behind the point of telling the story in a multimedia platform. Already I'm finding that I now skim over embedded videos on media pages because the last few I had visited have been shaky and badly shot.

I truly hope that the public finds a renewed hunger for well told narratives, for stories that can change people's perceptions, change policies or bring about social awareness. If they don't, the ability of the media to hold people, government and organisations to account, as well as inspire, heart-warm and convey truth, is at risk of disappearing.

**What has been the most memorable (or embarrassing) moment of your career so far?**

So far in my short career I would have to say the most memorable aspect has been the multi-faceted documentation of the Black Saturday recovery. Not only was I there in the immediate aftermath of the fires, I was able to tell the stories of human triumph and loss; the clean-up and the rebuild; and, later, the untold stories. It's been a huge learning curve to not only find my way of approaching the photography of this but also the talking and interviewing of survivors in a way that didn't damage their own recovery. The friends and lasting contacts I made tell me I must have gotten it right for the most part, and that's a good feeling.

**Where do see yourself, and journalism, in five years?**

In the future I hope to find myself spending more time on investigative pieces as well as foreign correspondent-type work.

I just hope journalism in the next few years can find its balance itself and become the respected profession that it was in its heyday.

You only have to take a look at non-democratic countries where government controls the media to see how it oppresses the people through the control of opinion. This in essence is the control of freedom.

■ **Radio: Gina McKeon  
FBI Radio**



**When and why did you decide that you wanted to be a journalist?**

I don't think there was ever a point when I decided to be

a journalist, to be honest! I was more just doing the things I liked – radio broadcasting, interviewing, working with music, writing, research – and they led me to journalism in the end.

**What does it take to be a great radio journalist?**

A knack for understanding what makes a strong, engaging narrative;

curiosity, empathy and patience; an ability to write for the ear, not the eye; managing to actively listen to your subject while keeping an eye on your mic levels; and a strong bicep to hold up the mic for those long interviews.

**What's been the most memorable (or embarrassing!) moment of your career so far?**

Finally hearing the *All The Best* special on The Block in Redfern go to air after months of editing, research, meetings, interviews and very late nights. When I heard how the voices of the people I'd spoken to came together with the music and soundscapes, it was a very proud moment. It felt like the people of The Block were finally able to tell their side of the story.

**What's the best and the worst part of the job?**

One of my favourite parts is heading out into the field: meeting people, interviewing, listening out for and recording atmospheric sounds. But I also love being in a job where you can hear about something you find fascinating or you don't think is quite right, and you can investigate it further. Another great aspect is editing everything you've recorded together: crafting the music and atmos with the voices. But there's a flipside to a love of editing: it means long nights hunched over a glowing screen which does a good job of wrecking your eyesight and your social life!

**Congratulations to ABC Journalist, Jake Sturmer  
2012's Walkley Young Australian Journalist of the Year**



■ Print: Anthony DeCeglie,  
*The Sunday Times*



**When and why did you decide that you wanted to be a journalist?**

Journalism was a natural fit for my curiosity

about current affairs. I think my fate was sealed the first time I entered a newsroom as an intern. The chief-of-staff gave me \$50 and told me my first job was to put a bet on for him at the TAB. It was a scene straight out of the movies.

**What are the elements of a great newspaper article?**

For me, the difference between a good news article and a great one is the level of detail. It can be descriptive (such as the tattoo that a criminal boasted) or informative (such as tracking down quotes a politician made years before he backflipped on a decision). I love reading stories where it's obvious that the journo had stayed back late in the office to pore over every page of a report when others just went with the press release of the executive summary.

**What has been the most memorable (or embarrassing!) moment of your career so far?**

I was lucky enough to spend the first half of 2011 in New York on

secondment with News Corporation. I was part of the editorial team that launched *The Daily* – the world's first iPad only newspaper. It was awe-inspiring to work alongside colleagues who had years of experience at publications like the *New York Post*, *The New York Times* and CNN. **What's your advice for media students and others who aspire to a journalism career?**

Go to the bush first. I spent the first 16 months of my career at regional publications and learnt a lot. You're not only writing stories, you're also laying out pages, taking pictures, subediting contributed copy. Plus, when you're in a small town you're entirely accountable. If you spell someone's name wrong they'll tell you about it in the street or down the pub.

■ Online: Miranda Grant  
*ABC Open*



**When and why did you decide to be a journalist?**

At university, I studied Theatre/Media: the relationship between live performance and new media. I learnt to be a storyteller with an arsenal of technical tricks.

After a year touring Europe as a nanny for a family of street performers,

my dream to be a ventriloquist evaporated in a puff of smoke. I wanted to tell *real* stories.

So I moved to Mongolia.

As the producer and presenter of an English-language youth TV show aired on the Mongolian National Broadcaster, I came alive. Each week, the show explored a different aspect of Mongolian culture and investigated issues such as homosexuality, violence and the impact of mining. These stories had grit and, in turn, I found professional direction.

I am currently the ABC Open producer for Southern Queensland, a hybrid of reporter, community development officer and educator.

So to answer the question of when and why I decided to become a journalist: I didn't, officially. It just kind of caught up with me.

**What does it take to be a great online journalist?**

Having an awesome web development team! User experience is an important factor to consider when publishing online. As the journalist you need to be aware of how the audience behaves, about how they read across the page and interpret the information. Learning techniques like search engine optimisation really helps.

I think the skill of publishing online is having a keen sense of form. An online journalist is a writer, a video and radio producer and a

photographer all in one. The trick is employing each of these skills to tell all or part of a certain story.

**What has been the most memorable (or embarrassing!) moment of your career so far?**

On the platform of Tunkhel, a tiny town along the Trans-Mongolian railway, waiting in the minus-30 degree winter air, I noticed a group of teenage girls pointing towards me.

"Voice Box, Voice Box," they whispered to each other. A brave girl came over to me and asked for an autograph. I was blown away.

Even in the most remote parts of Mongolia, TV is an institution. As presenter of *Voice Box*, my face was in *gers*, Mongolian yurts, across the country a couple of times a week.

Being recognised is one thing. But recognising the ability to reach even the most remote regions is inspiring.

**Where do you see digital journalism in five years' time?**

Digital journalism will amplify the voices of marginalised people and make way for multiple truths. But with this saturation of story, the audience, once and for all, cannot afford to be passive. And the journalist cannot be faceless, hiding behind a policy of "objectivity". We will be curators, finding patterns, finding interests and sharing these with our audience.

In five years' time, digital journalism will reflect diversity more than ever.

Nikon Australia congratulates **Jason Edwards**, Photography winner of the 2012 Walkley Young Journalist of the Year awards.



Jason received a Nikon 1 V1 with a 1 Nikkor 10-30mm VR lens as a prize.



Jason Edwards, *Leader Newspapers Victoria*

**MyNikonLife.com.au**

*At the heart of the image*



# On the job

**Madeleine Genner** had to get creative to wangle her work experience at triple j's *Hack*, but it paid off

In 2003, as a second-year uni student, I went along to a media information day for journalism students. It was meant to be a chance to learn from media professionals and work out how to get a job in the industry. It was meant to be reassuring. It was terrifying.

The panels were a mix of know-it-all twentysomething journalists who had been doing work experience since age 16 and editors who told us they rarely hired kids straight out of uni. By the lunch break we were practically curled up in the foetal position. Studying for that Honours degree and living with Mum and Dad for the rest of our lives was sounding like a great idea.

Nine years on, the group of friends I was with that day all have media jobs. Good jobs. We attended the information day with 18 months still to run on our journalism degrees and we all saw it as an opportunity to really start doing some work experience.

I was keen to work at triple j's news and current affairs program *Hack*, so I tried to get work experience there. I got a rejection letter. At the time, *Hack* didn't run a proper work experience program (thankfully they do now). Before giving up, I decided to get creative. I worked out that all ABC emails followed the same structure: lastname.firstname@abc.net.au. So I took a punt and



**In those early days I was really "faking it" more than "making it", but with Google by my side, it wasn't impossible**

emailed presenters directly. Half an hour later I had a phone call and, the next week, I was in the triple j offices.

Thanks to a UTS degree and a bit of work at Sydney's then-fledgling community radio station FBi 94.5, I knew enough about making radio to be slightly more helpful than annoying, and as a work experience kid, that's really all you can hope for.

A few weeks later, I got a single day of paid producing work at triple j and from there I just stuck my hand up for every ABC job that was going. I worked as a runner for TV news, a news operations assistant for *Lateline*, and kept saying "yes" to triple j work when people were off sick.

A few months after that, I heard that some casual work was available at Radio National *Breakfast*. I was 21 at the time, putting me somewhat outside their target demographic, but I tried my best to not seem incredibly young. I'm sure I failed. But not so badly that they didn't give me a job.

I remember a conversation between producers on day one. They were trying to think of potential interview talent for a health story. They were discussing the merits of former federal health ministers from the '80s and early '90s. I'd only heard of one of them. In a room of senior journalists, I felt impossibly out of my depth.

It was at that point that I realised Google was my best friend. In those early days I was really "faking it" more than "making it", but with Google by my side, it wasn't impossible.

While I've done a few short stints at other parts of the ABC, I've been working at RN *Breakfast* for the past six years. The show reminds me almost every day how good radio can be. There is a tight-knit team of incredibly smart, compassionate people who pull ridiculous hours to make it happen.

At its very best, radio delivers a mix of immediacy, intelligence and intimacy that no other medium can achieve.

It's changed a lot in six years, too. There's more interaction with the audience thanks to Twitter, but it feels like we're competing more with other news services, too.

In 2010, I went back to triple j's *Hack* for six months as the program's producer. It felt like I'd come full circle. Now I was managing a group of four journalists and making sure the program got to air every afternoon. I was looking after the work experience kids, too, so I congratulated those who were slightly more helpful than annoying. As a work experience kid, that's really all you can hope for.

**Madeleine Genner** is a reporter and producer with Radio National's *Breakfast*

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# In the moshpit of opinion

The Punch's **Anthony Sharwood** doesn't care if online commenters end up off topic, because it's all part of the conversation. Cartoon by **Cathy Wilcox**

**W**e exist for our commenters. The comments people make in response to online news and opinion pieces are as important as the stories themselves, and anyone who doesn't get that should give up the game now.

I was part of a panel chat with James Valentine recently on ABC 702 Sydney. I think he expected me to lament the fact that online commenters have a nasty habit of derailing the conversation. Instead, I took the opposite tack, and celebrated the fact that online discussion threads tend to spin off topic within the first half dozen or so comments.

Obviously it would be great to see well-informed discussions on every piece on sites like The Punch or The ABC's The Drum, with expert after expert weighing in with carefully nuanced arguments. But that's not the way normal conversations work, and it's not how things work in the online realm either.

The Punch bills itself as "Australia's best conversation". It's a place where people can argue, swap banter, address the topic at hand or go off on wild tangents. That's how we all conduct conversations around the dinner table and the proverbial water cooler, and it's how things go on our website.

There are obviously limits. Among other things, we won't tolerate defamatory or racist comments and gratuitous name-calling. That said, we don't mind if the site occasionally turns into what our editor-in-chief David Penberthy fondly calls "a moshpit".

One of the ways we keep the moshpit churning is to moderate comments throughout the day. Most sites do semi-occasional comment uploads in large batches. We moderate constantly, every few minutes or so, from dawn till well after dusk. Our goal is for the readers to comment not just in response to the author, but among themselves.

Some days, we'll spend a day researching and writing a story. Other times we'll put together a quick eight-paragraph synopsis of a hot issue, then throw it over to the readers. Always, the goal is to stimulate conversation.

Some topics are pure catnip for commenters: gay marriage, the carbon tax, anything to do with religion and anything to do with Tony Abbott or Julia Gillard. But it would be wrong to think we throw in more of these stories each week just to get the comments up. Interestingly, the stories which attract the most comments on The Punch don't always get the most clicks. And clicks count more than comments. Like any print or online publication, we want readers.

That said, while great content attracts readers, a great forum for discussion is the way to keep them. And if that discussion wanders off on a tangent or wilfully ignores the points made by the author, then so be it.

Who listens to anyone else in real life, anyway? It'd be nice if a great speech in parliament was met with nods and applause from the other side, or if a bickering couple could acknowledge a fair point made by the other. Alas, life just doesn't work that way.

Before I worked at The Punch, I was a sports journalist. One thing I've learned as both a sports writer and sports fan is that you can't win an argument with facts or statistics.

Show an Indian Bradman's record and they'll come right back atcha with Tendulkar's longevity. It's the old aggregate vs average argument, and it's unwinnable.

If you eschew stats and argue emotively that Wayne Carey had a more imposing presence on the field than Tony Lockett, you'll end up

with a debate just as polarised.

I see similar patterns at The Punch. If you present a batch of really clear-cut evidence that the world appears to be warming as a result of human activity, someone will play the game of "my hyperlink is bigger than yours" and the data wars will rage on.

If you take an emotive argument, such as how asylum seekers should be processed, you'll have just as much discussion both ways.

The point of sites like The Punch is to bring those discussions out in the open, and to conduct them in real time. No-one's ever going to "win", but that's not even remotely the point. The point is to enable the debate.

For the record, I happen to think Tendulkar was better than Bradman, that Carey was worth two Locketts (his two premierships are more significant than Lockett's 1360 goals), and that people are warming the globe. I also happen to think that Sydney is twice the city Melbourne thinks it is.

If you have a pulse, I'm guessing you'd like to come back at me on at least one or two of those, wouldn't you? Lucky we have websites like The Punch where you can do exactly that in real time.

**Anthony Sharwood** is deputy editor of The Punch website, [thepunch.com.au](http://thepunch.com.au), published by News Limited; Twitter: @antsharwood

**Cathy Wilcox** is a cartoonist for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Sun-Herald*



**The Punch is a place where people can argue, swap banter, address the topic at hand or go off on wild tangents**



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CHANGE MEAN  
THE BARE  
NECESSITIES  
BECOME BARELY  
AFFORDABLE?

NEVER  
STOP  
ASKING

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# Facing the music

There are upsides and downsides to music journalism in the digital age, says **Craig Stephen**.

Cartoon by **Fiona Katauskas**

Like a spoilt child, music fans want more, more, more. But just because they can get everything when and where they want, it doesn't always lead to a happy soul.

As with all other forms of media over the last decade, music journalism has been reacting to the digital age. But the reaction has often been more of a tantrum, with a lot of mess being made along the way.

The fans demand because they can.

A music website can't establish any semblance of a following if it doesn't contain links to new or old music or tries to swing viewers away from YouTube.

Some of the more popular websites appear to be nothing more than a screaming match of graphics and multimedia; some of the less popular ones focus purely on the words. Some have their own face-to-face televised interviews. The competition is intense, but the quality is debatable. Meanwhile, many newspapers have devolved their coverage of music, relegating it to sidebars and frothy interviews.

Music journalism's heyday is generally regarded as the '70s and '80s, when scribblers such as Nick Kent, Jon Savage and Charles Shaar Murray themselves were often the story. Some took as many drugs and slept with as many groupies as the bands did to live the rock'n'roll lifestyle, to really feel how it was to be a popstar – or at least that's how the story went.

In the UK, music papers such as *NME*, *Melody Maker* and *Sounds* offered huge, in-depth features. In the US, *Rolling Stone* – established in 1967 – was an icon. In 1976 a 200-word live review could break a band – as Neil Spencer did with the Sex Pistols in *NME*.

Down Under, the selection in this era was less legendary – *Rolling Stone* had an Australian version, of course – but otherwise there were low-circulation, city-based publications such as *RAM*, *Juice* and *Juke* in Australia, and *Rip It Up* (which is still going) in New Zealand.

They tended to feature a lot of in-depth material and had a real connection to the artists. But while they were influential within the music industry, these magazines and fanzines were largely irrelevant to the bulk of music buyers, who found what they liked on the radio. They were, however, a launchpad for many writers.



One of those, Bernard Zuel – now with *The Sydney Morning Herald* and one of just three full-time music writers for newspapers in Australia, he reckons – was a product of *RAM*. Although he views the music papers he worked on as being fairly insignificant, he does empathise with those who look back on the time as a productive one for music journalism.

"There is an element of 'in my day things were better' because the mags of the 1970s and '80s allowed broader coverage and developed a strand of writers who learned their trade," he notes. But he also points out that when he first joined the *Herald* in the mid-'80s, its music coverage was limited to "two small things in the back of the television guide".

"There are pockets of quality, and not a lot of it," he says of music journalism today, noting Robert Forster's 1500-word column in *The Monthly* as an example of where good writing can prevail.

Veteran New Zealand freelance writer Graham Reid pinpoints the great era of rock journalism as being from 1975 to 1995, when writers had more opportunities and freedom of movement.

"You would see writers out with bands on the road, artists being interviewed when they didn't have an album or tour to promote, etc, etc. There was far better access.

"These days you get 'phoners' with artists, which used to be about 30 minutes [and] now they are usually 15, and you have to ask yourself just how useful they are. They are just promo devices and the artists give the same interview each time.

"Quite often I feel I am not writing up an interview but merely transcribing.

"There is nowhere near as much give-and-take/conversation as there used to be. Artists just say their bit about the new album and that's it."

In terms of the current state of music journalism, two things stand out: the lack of depth in the print press and the fickleness, and fast flow, of the internet.

Reid is particularly scathing of the current attitude of the press towards features, having to drop his word count for articles on artists from 2500 words to, if he's lucky, 800 words. Album reviews that would have once contextualised the artist, album and music now limit the writer to a stifling 100–250 words.

Clearly you can't dissect 12 tracks and/or an hour or more of music within such perimeters. How on earth would the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind the Bollocks*, an album about the state of England in 1977, or the Beatles' groundbreaking *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* be given a proper examination in today's climate?

Reid believes the internet has been under-used in that regard, with a lot of online reviewers lacking such basic skills as being able to tell a story or spell correctly.

But while some sites lack articulate writing and deliver only graphics and images, there are also some good music journalism websites out there. Among them are Pitchfork and Noise+Mess, which I am delighted to see has, as I write, an article on why not all good music is limited to Sydney and Melbourne, and investigates what Adelaide has to offer.

The digital age has also brought with it a greater degree of freedom, allowing sites to focus on what *they* like, and for blogs to zoom in on particular acts or genres and give them a decent run.

As well, digital streaming means music journalists now have a quick, easy way of listening to new releases (although that may be on a laptop with tinny speakers and scrappy sound quality).

"There is a lot of music that is being heard by a lot of people without any major support behind it or money, and that is being promoted by online recommendations and alternative sources," says Zuel.

And while the money-grabbing corporate labels have been buying up small labels to maximise their profits for decades, Zuel notes that new acts can now use digital technology to bypass such routes altogether. "Diversity is better now than it's been for a long, long time," he says.

**Craig Stephen** is a subeditor at Radio New Zealand with his own blog, *Porky Prime Cuts*; [craighaggis.wordpress.com](http://craighaggis.wordpress.com)  
**Fiona Katauskas** is a freelance cartoonist; [fionakatauskas.com](http://fionakatauskas.com)

# The vanishing Kiwi

Will the loss of TVNZ 7 bring on a fast fade of New Zealand's cultural identity? Labour MP **Clare Curran** makes her case

**T**elevision is a powerful medium. In just 60 years it has transformed the world, and soon content will be instantly available from anywhere with an internet connection.

But in an environment where you can access programs, films and music from almost anywhere, having your own indigenous content to reinforce your nation's identity takes on a special significance.

In New Zealand, we are going backwards.

I grew up on TV that featured characters such as Fred Dagg, McPhail and Gadsby, Billy T James. Programs such as *Country Calendar*, *A Dog's Show*, *Close to Home*, *Spot On*, *Play School* and *What Now?*

Now my kids are growing up on Cartoon Network, Disney Channel and mostly American tweenie programs. I wouldn't mind if there were a balance with good Kiwi content aimed at young people.

Quality children's programs, documentaries, dramas, comedy, investigative news and analysis: they've all become as rare as hen's teeth.

Except for TVNZ 7. It was a fledgling creature. A digital television channel, full of locally made programs and quality overseas ones. It challenged, it made you laugh, it was thought-provoking and quirky.

It didn't cost much and around 1.6 million Kiwis watched it every month. TVNZ 7 should have been spreading its wings. Instead it had its head chopped off on June 30.

Public television broadcasting is now dead in New Zealand.

Four-and-a-half years ago, a Labour government invested NZ\$79 million in establishing two new commercial-free digital channels, TVNZ 6 and 7. TVNZ was charged with establishing the channels and ensuring they would become sustainable after the six-year funding ran out. Last year, TVNZ 6 was converted into commercial Channel U.

In the meantime, TVNZ 7 flourished. TVNZ, however, never marketed it. As they admitted to me, they didn't want a lot of people watching TVNZ 7 as it took viewers away from TV One and Two.

Then early last year, the conservative National government decided TVNZ 7 wasn't essential and



Despite the fight TVNZ 7 has now been switched off.

it would scrap it. It has now ceased to exist and TVNZ is using the digital channel to play reruns of TV One. It's simply a tragedy.

Why is this happening?

The government says we can't afford it, we don't need it, no-one watches it, and those who do watch it are elite, old and irrelevant.

They say that public broadcasting can be delivered by NZ on Air.

But the latest monthly audience figures by Nielsen show almost 1.6 million New Zealanders watched TVNZ 7 in May, an increase of nearly 120,000 viewers in just one month. That's just a few thousand less than Māori TV and almost half the size of the audience for TV One, Two and 3. And that was without marketing.

There's no doubt that times are tough, but \$16 million a year to run a television channel is modest compared with the \$120 million profit that Sky TV made last year, and the \$120 million plus that the government has forked out to consultants to prepare our energy companies for sale.

Once TVNZ 7 goes, NZ will be the only country in the OECD, apart from Mexico, which doesn't have a public television broadcaster.

In the UK, £4.6 billion a year pays for the BBC. In Australia, the federal government allocates \$912 million per year to the ABC. They know how

important public broadcasting is to deliver news that isn't driven by ratings, and intelligent analysis and local productions that reflect Australia's culture.

We are losing that in NZ. How many of our kids are growing up with American accents? How many locally made shows are there on our television? Increasingly they are few and far between, and then they are commercialised to the point where the advertising matters more than the content.

In April, I released a member's bill called Public Broadcasting (TV7) Bill, specifically with the intent of saving TVNZ 7. It would require TVNZ to continue to fund TVNZ 7 through the proceeds of its commercial programming, but would keep TVNZ 7 out of the control of TVNZ and more independent of the state.

It was part of the wider campaign to try to save TVNZ 7. In recent months, 35,000 people have signed the petition to keep TVNZ 7. There have been a dozen public meetings around the country, and rallies in Wellington and Auckland. The momentum continues to build for public broadcasting, even though TVNZ 7 has been axed.

The Save TVNZ 7 group are doing a great job. Their campaign is morphing into an organisation that may well be the kernel of the next public broadcaster.

If you believe public broadcasting is important, please continue to support this campaign. Let's not have our kids growing up on American TV. Let's have a channel that's quirky, interesting and thought-provoking. A channel where people like Wallace Chapman from *Back Benches* flourish. Russell Brown from *Media7*. Linda Clark from *The Court Report*. Where Kiwi producers have more opportunities to make Kiwi content.

Let's decide that a public television channel is important to our nation. Let's keep TVNZ 7. Let's fund it properly and let's be proud of who we are.

**Clare Curran** is the member for Dunedin South and New Zealand Labour's spokesperson for broadcasting and communications and IT. She previously worked as a journalist and in public relations



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# A good teacher

Journalism lecturer **Mia Lindgren** has just completed a different sort of 'internship' at Radio National. Illustration by **Rod Emmerson**

For the last four months I've been journalistically replenished. I have returned to working full-time as a producer of long-form radio documentary for ABC Radio National. Don't get me wrong – I enjoy teaching others to produce radio. But doing it myself again was like returning to the old country (I am a migrant). At first my mother tongue was a bit rusty and I worried that I would make cultural faux pas having been away for a while. But it all came back to me, and after only a few weeks I returned to being a native speaker of radio journalism again.

I have just completed an inaugural production-based secondment with ABC Radio National's Social History and Features Unit, at Southbank in Melbourne. As part of the secondment I have produced radio features for the network's history program, *Hindsight*, and for its program *360Docs*.

It's been great to be back. I have found myself obsessing about the craft and language of producing "built radio" again: whether my interviews and audio grabs are strong enough; the sound quality of my recordings; how to create mood with music and other aural tools, and how to write scripts to get the story across. This is what I used to do before I became an academic. It was my native tongue as a journalist and broadcaster.

Like many other mid-career journalists I followed a well-trodden pathway when I moved across to academe. I was keen to share my experiences with students and I was looking forward to having the time to research and reflect on journalism. But I was baffled by how hard it was to maintain my journalism practice.

Doing journalism was clearly valued by students and colleagues, especially in practical courses such as radio production. How could I maintain my street cred, my engagement with the craft, my expertise, if I didn't *do* journalism?

Universities pride themselves on having lecturers and tutors with real journalism experiences on staff. Yet unlike many health academics who see patients as part of their job, journalism academics don't have practice in their job description. University funding is based on student numbers and research publications, so journalism practice doesn't easily fit it.

Journalism academics have tried to solve this dilemma by arguing that journalism should be counted as research. I even wrote

## Universities have internship programs for their journalism students... But there is no pathway for getting experienced journalism academics back into the industry

a PhD about situating radio documentary production in an academic framework. There is no doubt that some types of journalism, such as long-form documentary and feature production, and investigative reporting, should be counted as academic research. But there are also many news stories that are just news stories – not pieces of replicable research outputs. If universities want to attract academics who continue to call themselves journalists, they need to find other ways to value journalistic practice.

Universities have internship programs for their journalism students, with the aim to feed them into future jobs. But there is no pathway for getting experienced journalism academics back into the industry.

The production-based secondment with Radio National is an innovative model. There are obvious benefits for both workplaces. I have been able to maintain and upgrade my radio production skills while developing strong relationships and networks at the national public broadcaster that will also be useful for my students. The industry has been able to tap into expertise developed over years of teaching and researching in the specialist field of documentary making.

During this time I was on leave without pay from my lecturing job at Monash. The university was very supportive, understanding the importance of industry engagement.

The secondment was conceived by Michelle Rayner, branch editor of Radio National in Victoria, and executive producer of *Hindsight*. "The opportunity arose when a senior producer at RN Features took leave to undertake another project. With a hungry program schedule, the unit required a broadcaster to fill this vacancy, who could hit the ground running, both in terms of story

ideas and production skills," she says.

"I knew of Dr Lindgren's background in broadcast journalism and as a radio feature producer, so we saw the secondment as double-pronged: a chance to offer journalists in academe time back in industry, and a mechanism which could foster stronger relationships with the journalism faculties in universities such as Monash.

"Dr Lindgren is the first academic we have had undertaking hands-on program production for a sustained period – instead of as a one-off project – we'd love to be able to find a way to offer this production-based secondment in the future.

"We need to develop more outcome-based collaborations with people currently in the university sector with the craft skills for documentary making. If we don't find ways to engage with journalism and other humanities-based academics, then a specialist area in the industry, such as audio feature production, is in danger of a drainage of skills – skills and an understanding of a language, telling stories in sound, which has developed over decades of practice."

Expanding this type of secondment to other media companies, beyond ABC's Radio National, could be a new way of strengthening the ties between the industry and academe. It would open up travel routes for journalism academic migrants wanting to return home (for extended visits).

**Dr Mia Lindgren** is a senior lecturer in journalism at Monash University, Melbourne. She has been a journalism academic for 14 years and also produces radio stories for Australian and Swedish radio as a freelancer. **Rod Emmerson** is editorial cartoonist for *The New Zealand Herald*



# The tricky independence of special reports

The topic of his newspaper's special reports may have been determined by ad dollars, but **Mark Lawson** never let the ad people dictate what he wrote. Cartoon by **Oslo Davis**

One of the many calls I got while I was special reports editor for my newspaper was from a PR pushing his client's product who, until recently, had worked as a subeditor on the same floor as me.

"Look, I know you guys don't write up anything unless the company has taken an ad, but I thought you might take a look at this," he said.

"But we've never worked liked that!" I said, my voice rising with indignation. "We've always been just like the rest of the paper!"

"You are?" The PR was astonished.

Sigh.

Every newspaper you care to mention now runs what may be termed special reports in one form or another, and that includes *The Economist*, *The Washington Post* and, as far as I know, small provincial papers. These reports may be a few pages that are part of the book or may be a lift-out of eight to 12 pages, on a specific topic within the paper's ambit. In the case of *The Australian Financial Review*, the topics range from defence through to online trading; risk management through to do-it-yourself super and executive travel.

These topics are mostly set by advertising, and that point can make journalists who have spent their careers in the ivory towers of political beats or reporting on takeovers feel uncomfortable with the concept. But how is this different from any other specialist publication?

These reports are, effectively, a series of specialist publications that happen to use the newspaper as a distribution platform. They deal with topics that may not get a run in the rest of the paper. And, no, the ad people do not tell us what stories to write beyond the choice of the broad topic itself, although some confusion on this point is understandable.

When we do a special report, the stories are treated just as they are in the rest of the newspaper, but other publications do sometimes take a different approach. On



## We can and do offend advertisers and prick pretensions, just like the rest of the paper

occasion, stories for their special reports are commissioned by someone in advertising, with no involvement by staff journalists, and a strap at the top of the pages declares the report to be a "special advertising feature". Sometimes we have run special reports, only for a competitor to run a "special advertising feature" on the same topic.

Sigh.

When the question of editorial independence arises I am sometimes told that other publications do it differently. I immediately fling this back at the person making the statement by asking them to name the publications. Some shuffling of feet ensues before they cough up the titles of one or two small publications (usually including at least one professional association magazine).

While most emphatically driven by editorial rather than advertising, special reports do take a different line from the rest of the paper. The stories are features rather than news stories; how-tos or reports rather than hard-hitting exposés. This can be illustrated with the example of an online trading report aimed at the day traders. The securities market may be in freefall, but we can hardly just tell traders to stay away from the market. No-one would bother reading the report.

But we also cannot pretend that the market outlook is rosy, although the ad people may prefer that approach. Our readers are not fools. So we write stories about making money in a falling market, or getting set for when the market might turn, or the psychology of trading, or cash management accounts or whatever. We still say the market is gloomy, we just don't hit readers over the head with it – we can leave that to the front page.

We can and do offend advertisers and prick pretensions, just like the rest of the paper. For a time we ran a series of 'green' reports under various titles, and in a couple I wrote articles saying I thought the whole global warming scare was just that (I'm a big enough climate change sceptic to have had a book published). The ad guys told me later they had cringed, but it did not seem to make the slightest difference to advertising at the time.

Although the staff journalists accept that they may have to write for special reports and sometimes even volunteer for the popular topics, such as defence or business travel, usually it's better to use freelancers even for the paper's core subjects. Staffers have daily obligations to their own sections and editors, and may have to file for the web during the day. Special reports are often at the bottom of a long to-do list and the result can be a rehash of a section lead of two weeks ago.

In contrast, a special reports story for a daily is at the top of the freelancer's to-do list, and if they don't know much about subjects like risk management or CFDs (contracts for difference, a leveraged market trading instrument favoured by day traders), they will make an effort to find out. After a few reports they will even build expertise in the area. If staff journalists have never heard of the report's subject before – that can happen a lot – they are not going to write about it.

But there is still that lingering disdain most journalists feel for special reports. And then there was the woman who rang up and asked: "How much is editorial, and how much is advertising?"

Sigh.

**Mark Lawson** was recently shifted from the reports section to leader writing for *The Australian Financial Review*

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# The ghosts of Fleet Street

**John Coleman** remembers how it was before Rupert arrived. Cartoon by **Jonathan Shapiro**

**T**here's a bronze plaque in a corner of Fleet Street, at Ludgate Circus, dedicated to the reporter/novelist Edgar Wallace, telling how he "walked with kings, knew wealth and poverty" and "of his talents he gave lavishly, but to Fleet Street he gave his heart."

That summed up my attitude and that of my colleagues to the venerable street in the pre-Murdoch era. It was a street steeped in history, where the ghosts of great writers and poets such as Samuel Johnson, Milton, Dryden and Goldsmith and, more contemporary, Graham Greene and Edgar Wallace, walked its pavements and narrow lanes. It was lined with towering newspaper offices and warm, hospitable pubs.

The building that dominated it all, within a few paces of that Edgar Wallace plaque, was the black marbled *Express* building with its gold-leaf ceiling in the grand foyer.

I worked there for six years, for *The Sunday Express* under legendary editor John (later Sir John) Junor, and some of the street's famous names including Chapman Pincher and Brendan Mulholland, who went to jail in 1963 for refusing to disclose his sources in the Vassall spy case.

The paper, founded by Lord Beaverbrook, was in the hands of his son, Battle of Britain fighter pilot Sir Max Aitken; *The Daily Express* and *Evening Standard* were part of the chain.

My years there ran up to 1970. By the previous year, Murdoch had acquired the *News of the World* and the workers' paper, the former *Daily Herald* which was renamed *The Sun* in its declining years and which Murdoch converted into a sensational tabloid.

The 1960s was a different era: the aftermath of the Great Train Robbery and the Profumo scandal, of great broadsheet

**Above the news desk was a gigantic sign attached to the ceiling urging all to "Get it right the first time!"**

newspapers and, yes, intense competition. *The Sunday Express* had 4,250,000 readers and was determined not only to keep its market share but add to it.

The paper was interested only in exclusives. Arthur Christiansen, famous editor of *The Daily Express*, was no longer around, but his influence was all-pervasive. "Ban the word 'exclusive,'" said his stylebook, still in the desk allotted to me. "Our aim is to make every story exclusive. Therefore we have no need to boast."

Phone hacking and other criminal conduct exposed in the *News of the World* scandal was unknown. The Australian Journalists' Association Code of Ethics, calling on its members to report the news honestly, fairly, balanced and accurately, had been a way of life for me since I began in newspapers at 17 – I was never asked to do otherwise on the *Express*.

While I can't speak first-hand for the other Fleet Street newspapers that were flourishing, unethical conduct was not apparent although, of course, there were instances of chequebook journalism (as opposed to criminal bribery of public officials) to gain exclusives.

"Is it new – and true?" was the test from the *Express* news desk. *The Sunday Express* reporters' room was on the fifth floor of that black marbled building and on Saturdays, when the paper went to press, we moved down to *The Daily Express*'s huge second floor, with a stream of subeditors and reporters. Above the news desk, where the news editor and his assistants presided with a battery of phones, was a gigantic sign attached to the ceiling urging all to "Get it right the first time!"

As a weekly paper, *The Sunday Express* was not so much interested in the tired rhetoric of politicians, but in holding them to account. We tracked still-at-large Great Train Robbers, wrote of Cold War spies and the gangster Kray brothers. The paper, too, delighted in highlighting the blunders of bureaucracy at all levels, in exposing swindlers and, above all, focusing on human interest – in tried and true Beaverbrook formula, stories had to be built around people, the more heart-warming the better.

We travelled across Britain, Europe and the world for stories. I had a round-the-world assignment to cover stories ranging from how British migrants were faring in Australia, to Hong Kong and Singapore as tourist destinations and a tropical island for sale off the north Queensland coast.

The young foreign editor, Tom Jenkins, flew across the deserts of the Middle East and in a memorable feature wrote of finding



the wreck of one of the trains blown up by Lawrence of Arabia on the Hejaz railway.

The Press Council in those days had plenty of teeth and the papers took its adjudications seriously. It came down heavily on intrusion into private grief and papers steered clear of it. (I was threatened on one occasion with a report to the Council when, determined to get a balanced account to a story, I rang an Orthodox Jewish official several times on a Saturday to get his response to allegations, unaware that he was not supposed to answer the phone on the Sabbath. The *Express* sent me to the official's office to apologise, and it was accepted.)

The *Express* papers, unlike many of those I had left in Australia, were writers' papers rather than stories owing their merit to skilful rewriting by subeditors. If, for instance, the introduction didn't – in Arthur Christiansen's words – "flow like honey", the story would be spiked. We competed for space in the paper not only against other papers, but each other and correspondents in every town and village across Britain, as well as our own foreign correspondents.

Hours were long – as long as an assignment or story took. On press day we began early and finished late, after 10pm, often midnight or the early hours of the morning. We needed to complete our stories and gain editor Junor's attention. John Junor and his executives remained on the back bench for as long as the rest of us, with chain-smoking Junor tearing up the front page near press time if it didn't suit him.

It's true there was a preoccupation with the doings of the royals and nobility, but the reporting by and large was tame compared with today's standards. Among my contacts was a young Western Australian, Bill Heseltine, who was appointed to the Buckingham Palace press office, later becoming the Queen's private secretary and knighted. It was a mutually beneficial relationship, although I never scored



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► a page one story from him, and we remained good friends.

Another key contact during the Rhodesian crisis, when the country made its Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965, was Angus Ogilvy, Princess Alexandra's husband, who was a director of Lonrho (London-Rhodesia) with interests in an oil pipeline blockaded by the British at Beira in Mozambique.

I became in effect *The Sunday Express* Commonwealth correspondent with a range of contacts in the Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and Rhodesian (now Zimbabwe) high commissions as well as the South African embassy. I wrote a series of exposés about young Australians being jailed for overstaying as visitors at a time when immigration controls were being tightened. Among exclusive interviews were the Dambusters' Sir Barnes Wallis and the inventor of the hovercraft, Sir Christopher Cockerell.

Most Fleet Street papers, including *The Sunday Express* and *Daily Express*, were, as already noted, broadsheets. An exception was *The Daily Mirror* which, right down to its one-paragraph fillers, was brilliantly edited. *The News of the World*, too, was a broadsheet with a modest circulation compared with recent times. It was also produced cheaply, relying heavily on court

reports about the activities of paedophiles and other sex cases.

Circulations of other papers also ran into millions and management was in the hands of editors more interested in scoops than economics.

The time was ripe for Rupert to move in. From 1969 on he gradually dominated the industry, adding *The Times* and *Sunday Times* to his stable, and moving them to the docklands district of Wapping. Other great newspaper titles also moved from Fleet Street. The *Express* changed owners and shifted somewhere beyond Blackfriars Bridge. Its original black marbled building was torn down and replaced by investment bankers Goldman Sachs.

It seems the heart, too, has gone from the street that Edgar Wallace, my colleagues and I loved.

**John Coleman** joined the Australian Information Service in Canberra, then Australia's official information agency, after his stint on Fleet Street. Later, as editor of *The Catholic Leader*, he led the team which in 1989 shared a United Nations Media Peace Prize with *TIME Magazine*. He now freelances. This was first published in *The Canberra Times* August 27, 2011

**Jonathan Shapiro** is a South African cartoonist; [www.zapiro.com](http://www.zapiro.com)

## A night at the Walkleys

Bob Menzies was prime minister, Eisenhower was US president, John XXIII was Pope and television had been in Australia for two years when Ampol CEO William Walkley presented me with a Walkley at the Sydney Journalists' Club.

Syd Crossland was the AJA's general secretary and I looked self-conscious (which I was) in the TV news report. I was wearing a lightweight, fawn suit and had flown from Townsville to collect the 1958 Best Provincial News Story for *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* and *North Queensland Register* about the cyclone which devastated coastal Bowen that Easter.

I can still visualise the white face of the young pilot in our single-engined Auster when, buffeted by the tail-end of the cyclone, I tried to convince him to land. He refused, but we flew in the next morning.

After the Walkley presentation, I tried out the Journalists' Club's poker machines, then unknown in Queensland, and was taken on a pub crawl by journalists from *The Daily Mirror*. As we left, I glimpsed Douglas Lockwood, the Melbourne *Herald's* Darwin correspondent, who had received the top award. He was staring in a Prouds' store window, no doubt selecting a gift for his wife.

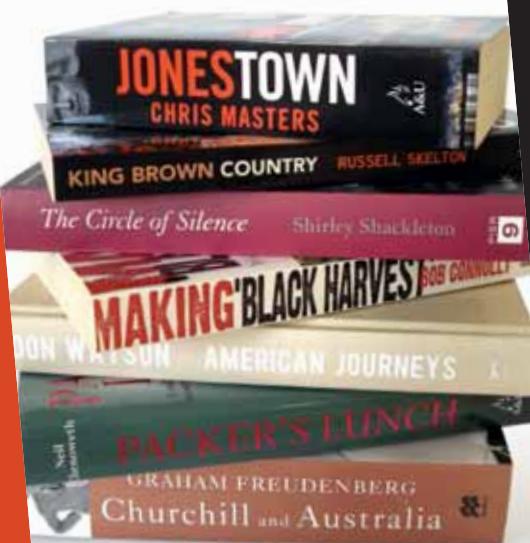
He had written a brilliant piece about a young Aboriginal girl, beautifully dressed in white to present a bouquet to the Queen in Darwin, who then returned to her humpy home.

The pub crawl went on for hours and included Kings Cross. I have a hazy memory of being driven into a dark backstreet around 2am, a hand emerging with a couple of sly grog longnecks and cash being handed over.

I returned to the Hotel Australia where the night's accommodation was part of the award. I received £100 and a bronze statuette. The statuette still has pride of place in my study. **John Coleman**

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# Going beyond the stars

Celebrity status doesn't count in the Head On Portrait Prize and Festival. For **Moshe Rosenzveig**, it's all about the photo

**H**ead On grew out of a strong feeling I had that the contemporary photography scene in Sydney could be so much more than what was on exhibition at the time. I also wanted to make a statement about our obsession with celebrity photographs. So in 2004 I founded the Head On Portrait Prize to showcase good work, regardless of the celebrity of either subject or photographer.

It soon became the largest photographic portrait prize in Australia, and in 2009 I expanded the event to include a seminar which attracted nearly 400 people. I felt it indicated the hunger and the need for a quality photography event in Sydney, and in 2010 the Head On Photo Festival was born.

I remember someone saying that it would be great if we could get 10 or 12 galleries involved. When I said, "let's aim at 20 or 25 galleries", people looked at me as if I was mad.

As it turns out, Head On is now the world's second largest photographic festival. The 2012 festival kicked off at Sydney's Customs House on May 4, with a buzzing 2000-strong crowd. Throughout May and June, there were more than 200 events and exhibitions at 100-plus venues and galleries across Sydney and into the Blue Mountains.

The number of portrait prize submissions has grown to the point where we can no longer take submissions on paper. We receive more than 2500 entries per year, which we judge without names to ensure we choose images based only on quality. We have yet to be allocated any state or federal funding to run the festival, so the competition is one of our main revenue streams.

The competition is judged by industry professionals – photographers, picture editors and gallerists – who change each year to keep the prize selection fresh. Emerging artists, established artists, photographers with years of working experience but limited exhibition history all submit work to us on an equal footing; if the work is good, we help make that exhibition happen.

This year, the festival had corporate support from Olympus Imaging Australia and that helped us reach every corner of Sydney; from the large public galleries in the city, such as the Art Gallery of NSW and the Museum of Contemporary Art, to commercial galleries and other venues such as cafes, restaurants and outdoor exhibitions, from Centennial Park to the Blue Mountains.



This year was also the first time we brought over internationally renowned photographers: US-based Magnum photographer David Alan Harvey, who is well known for his assignments for *National Geographic*, Pablo Bartholomew (India) and Valeriy Klamm (Russia).

I'm very proud also of our partnership with TAFE Sydney Institute of Photography, which gives us an ideal platform and location to connect emerging photographers with the industry's best. The festival has always been at the forefront of providing exposure for emerging photographers. Many photographers tell us that through Head On they were able to exhibit in galleries, sold work and gained further career opportunities.

Our only criterion is, "Is it a good photo?" We don't shy away from controversial topics, but equally we don't do things because they are politically correct. Yet Head On has provided a forum to highlight important stories and social issues.

In 2010, we exhibited work by Afghan photographers (AINA Photo Agency), auctioned off the images and sent the revenue to the photographers. In 2011, we ran photography workshops for

Tamara Dean's Centre of the Universe.

**Our only criterion is, "Is it a good photo?" We don't shy away from controversial topics, but equally we don't do things because they are politically correct**

disadvantaged children in inner-Sydney and exhibited their work. This year, Kerry Payne displayed billboards around Sydney dealing with the subject of grief after suicide, and Ginette Snow exhibited images of same-sex parents in normal, everyday family situations. Megan Lewis lived with the Martu people, one of the last Indigenous groups in Australia's Western Desert to come into contact with Europeans. Her intimate photographs showed the humour, beauty and friendship of the Indigenous community at odds with Western influences.

In 2013 we will be consolidating the size of the festival and refining the quality and impact of the exhibitions and work on display. Having said that, we still have a few announcements up our sleeve that will push Head On to the next level.

**Moshe Rosenzveig**, the founder and director of Head On Photo Festival, is a photojournalist, commercial photographer, educator and award-winning television producer/director. Keep up to date with Head On Photo Festival announcements at [www.headon.com.au](http://www.headon.com.au) or [www.facebook.com/HeadOnPhotoFest](http://www.facebook.com/HeadOnPhotoFest)



## Eye for detail

**Montague (Monty) Thomas Archibald Wedd**

January 5, 1921 – May 4, 2012



**A**djoining the Williamtown air base north of Newcastle is the Monarch museum. It contains a display of military uniforms, antique weapons, toy soldiers and collectables. The content reflected Monty Wedd's fascination with Australian history, which grew from his insistence on getting every detail in the historical comics he drew correct.

Wedd was born in Glebe and educated at Randwick Boys High School. He said, "Comic strips played a big part in my life as a boy. They were great escapes from the humdrum reality of life."

Leaving school during the Depression, he walked the streets for six months looking for work before eventually landing a job at 10 shillings a week. He left for a job in the art department at Grace Bros. It did not last, as World War II started and he signed up with the Australian Imperial Force in 1941. When the war ended he spent three years completing a Commercial Art Course at East Sydney Tech.

He sold his first comic strip in 1946 – "Sword and Sabre", set in the French Foreign Legion – to Syd Nicholl's *Middy Malone Magazine*. Wedd said, "Syd was a remarkable man, who had a great love for all things Australian and suggested I create a strip with an Australian origin."

Wedd came up with "Captain Justice".

"The creation of this feature was to have a marked influence on my life," he said. "I knew little of Australian history, except what I had learnt in boring history lessons at school."

Working from a studio he shared with Nicholls, Wedd was meticulous in his research into historical detail and drew the comic as accurately as he could.

Working in Australia's comic book industry, which flourished in the 1940s and 1950s, Monty drew a number of comics but always found his historically based Australian comics were the most popular. He also became a regular on the Channel 9 TV programs *Tell the Truth* and *Play Your Hunch*, displaying his collection of historical items that he had gathered for his comics.

From September 1964 to April 1965, *Woman's Day* ran a full page of the "Captain Justice" comic.

"This was successful," Wedd said. "But a problem arose when the assistant editor wished to write the comic. I reluctantly agreed until I discovered the material offered downgraded Captain Justice and was entirely unsuitable. I withdrew the comic rather than face ridicule."

Next, Wedd was commissioned by the Decimal Currency Board to create "Dollar Bill" comics on Australian currency. Wedd drew about 60 strips that were given to Australian newspapers in 1966.

In 1970 Wedd began producing a comic for the *Daily Mirror* illustrating Captain Cook's journal. Following this he turned his hand to a series on Ned Kelly for the *Sunday Mirror* and *Sunday Telegraph*. It was originally expected to run for 39 weeks, but extended to 146 weeks so Wedd could produce a detailed examination of Kelly's life. A similar 400-episode feature on the bushranger Ben Hall followed, and then an even longer series called "Birth of a Nation".

Wedd had started collecting items for reference in the 1940s and this stimulated an interest in collecting historical artifacts. As the number of items grew, he needed space to house them. So in 1960 he opened a museum in Narrabeen. The museum closed when Wedd realised it had outgrown the space available, and in 1998 he moved to Williamtown and a bigger museum.

Wedd won Stanley Awards in 1987 and 1989 for his comics and in 1993 was awarded the Order of Australia for his services as an author, historian and illustrator. In 2004 the Australian Cartoonists' Association presented him with the Jim Russell Award for his contribution to black and white art.

In 2009 Wedd's health began failing and he moved into a nursing home. He died in Fingal Bay on May 4, 2012.

Monty Wedd is survived by his wife Dorothy (née Jewell), whom he married in 1949, and their four children, Sandra, Justin, Warwick and Deborah.

**Lindsay Foyle** is a former deputy editor of *The Bulletin* and a past president of the Australian Cartoonists' Association. Since 2008 he has been working freelance

Russian embassy KGB agents attempting to enlist him. Under instructions from New Zealand security officials he played along, passing on the requests he was receiving and feeding back approved material. Eventually Prime Minister Keith Holyoake expelled the two KGB agents.

Highly principled, Round was prepared to speak out against what he perceived to be injustices. A famous spat with Singapore's prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, at a dinner table left him with a black mark and unable to get a visa to live in Singapore when appointed NZPA correspondent in South-East Asia. To its credit, the NZPA refused to fold and send another candidate and instead moved the post to Hong Kong to accommodate their man.

In Hong Kong he befriended legendary long-time correspondent Richard Hughes and was a regular attendee at his lunch group, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. A visitor to one of the lunches recalls Hughes mentioning privately that while he (Hughes) did not have much time for many of the fawning acolytes in Hong Kong, he had the highest respect for Round's professionalism and knowledge – although he was a young buck, 30 years his junior.

Back in Wellington in later years, where he ultimately became editor of NZPA, Round and others were instrumental in forming a Wellington equivalent of the Hughes lunch group. Monsoon Munchers, comprised of old Asian hands, mainly journalists and diplomats, is still flourishing after nearly 40 years. Round attended his last lunch just two weeks before he was murdered. Police have charged a suspect in the murder, but have given few details.

Always wanting to be in the action, reporting and writing, Round made hard work of the NZPA editor role, dealing with staffing and budgets. Belatedly, too, he was discovered to have bipolar disease which, with its wild mood swings, was responsible for causing some expensive spending sprees. The stress from this ultimately led to the breakdown of his marriage to his wife, Jan.

In later years, after leaving the news agency, Round concentrated for two decades on writing books on subjects which interested him. He was also frequently approached by people wanting him to chronicle their family histories.

Two years ago, Round received the New Zealand Order of Merit award for services to journalism. He was immensely proud of the honour.

Round had three children. One of his two daughters, Sally, is a reporter with Radio New Zealand International. She says that just before his death her father had accepted an assignment from the *NZ Listener* magazine to report on the anniversary of Samoan independence, meaning that they would have been covering the assignment together.

Round's son, Mark, an accomplished news photographer, is illustrations editor of the Wellington daily *The Dominion Post*. His eldest daughter, Susan, is a nurse in the provincial town of Masterton.

**Richard Long** is a former editor of *The Dominion* and *The Dominion Post* and a lifelong friend of Derek Round

## Always professional

**Derek Round**

February 23, 1935 – May 16, 2012



**D**erek Round was an old school gentleman journalist and foreign correspondent, at home with political leaders, diplomats and journalists around South-East Asia – a lifestyle which made it even more of a shock when he was found

battered to death in his flat in the provincial New Zealand city of Whanganui in mystifying circumstances on May 17.

Born and raised in New Zealand, Round worked for Australian Associated Press in the Pacific before moving to Reuters, serving as bureau chief in Singapore and Hong Kong. He later moved to the New Zealand Press Association (NZPA), as South-East Asian correspondent, based in Hong Kong. He was on one of the last planes out during the fall of Saigon at the end of the Vietnam War.

In his earlier days in the parliamentary press gallery in Wellington, Round was targeted by

# Defending your right to offend me

Free speech and open debate are never guaranteed, says **Pádraig Reidy**

First of all, a declaration: as someone who works at the coalface of anti-censorship activism in the UK with Index on Censorship, I have encountered Nick Cohen more than once, and would personally count him a comrade. Many of the cases cited by Cohen in this book have been campaigning issues for Index on Censorship.

When he writes in *You Can't Read This Book* of encountering the “angry nerds” who propelled England’s Libel Reform Campaign, or the shamefully perseverant actor-activists of the Belarus Free Theatre, it is because the *Observer* columnist and author was there among them as their stories unfolded.

Cohen is – to use the language of the liberal who prefers to paint his unwillingness to commit as a sign of nuance and cleverness – a “free speech fundamentalist”.

*You Can't Read This Book* begins with a quote from Christopher Hitchens: a blast at the religious fundamentalism that has dominated the debate on free speech since Ayatollah Khomeini’s open-tender assassin’s contract (let’s not insult intelligence or Islam by calling it a “fatwa”) on Salman Rushdie, issued on Valentine’s Day 1989:

*“There is an all-out confrontation between the ironic and the literal mind: between every kind of commissar and inquisitor and bureaucrat and those who know that, whatever the role of social and political forces, ideas and books have to be formulated by individuals.”*

And there is the root of all censorship: the will of one section of society to have power over what individuals say and ultimately think. It seems so obvious to say but is worth remembering every time you hear someone say (as they do), “I’m all in favour of free speech, but...” Whether it is through the methods of a genuine old-time dictator such as Belarus’s Alexander Lukashenko, the abuse of England’s (and indeed Australia’s) archaic libel laws, or the growing culture of “offence”, the impulse is always the same: control.

As I write, the UK parliament is debating the 2012 Defamation Bill, the campaign for which is detailed in the chapter “The



March Of The Nerds”. The campaign, fought since 2009, found its *cause célèbre* in the case of Simon Singh, a scientist who had playfully used the occasion of “Chiropractic Awareness Week” to write a comment article for the *Guardian* drawing attention to what he said were the misleading claims of the British Chiropractic Association.

Singh’s short article would most likely have passed unnoticed if the “alternative medicine” practitioners had not decided

## There is the root of all censorship: the will of one section of society to have power over what individuals say and ultimately think

to take offence and attempt to make an example of the author. What followed was an absurdly protracted lawsuit, which cost Singh two years of his life and, despite the fact he eventually won, tens of thousands of pounds.

The chiropractors complained of Singh’s assertion that they “happily promoted” “bogus treatments” for which there was not “a jot of evidence”. The UK sceptic movement, a disparate but enthusiastic bunch desperate for a cause, saw a threat to their two great loves: scientific evidence and free debate.

Their guru (if such a label is appropriate) Ben Goldacre, author of the *Bad Science* book and a column in *The Guardian* and himself a victim of a libel suit from a pseudoscientist, welcomed Cohen to the movement with the Obi-Wan Kenobi quote: “Strike us down, we shall become more powerful than you could possibly imagine.”

Goldacre was perhaps even more prescient than the old Jedi he invoked. The geeks did not wait to inherit the earth: they took things in their own hands, and 57,000 petition signatures (gathered by the Libel Reform Campaign led by Index on Censorship) and a general election later, the reform of London’s libel laws was written into the coalition agreement that formed the basis of the new UK government.

This, unfortunately, is a rare success story in Cohen’s account of the free speech battleground.

The single greatest victory for censorship, as detailed by Cohen, has been the movement of the perception of censorship from being seen as a weapon of the strong to a defence for the weak. Many censorious moves, such as the Organisation of Islamic Conference’s repeated attempts to ban “defamation of religion” are couched in the language of protection of minorities.

This is not completely without basis. It is all too easy for any of us to fall into the trap of believing that vulnerable minorities can be protected merely by shutting down language they may find offensive. It is also much too easy to dismiss people’s genuine upset and alarm as touchiness and reaction.

While Cohen is right to point out the political motivations behind the *Satanic Verses* and Danish cartoons controversies (both episodes detailed at length and with relish here), it is worth pointing out what led some older South Asian Muslims in Britain to feel defensive. Particularly in 1989, many of those protesting would have memories of sectarian violence in India, where an attack on Islam would often be followed by an attack on Muslims by Shiv Sena religious radicals (a threat that has not disappeared for today’s Indian Muslims).

But to acknowledge genuine offence is not the same as to acknowledge the right not to be offended, which cannot and should not be guaranteed.

In fact, Cohen in this book goes some way to reclaiming our right to be offended: by bigotry, misogyny, small-mindedness, institutionalised mediocrity, and Hitchens’ concept of the “literal mind”.

Cohen may be a “fundamentalist” for free expression, but he makes a compelling argument that free speech and open debate are, in the final sum, for the benefit of all. In an atmosphere where cries of “free speech” are too often caveated with that fatal “but”, it is an important point to make.

*You Can't Read This Book* by Nick Cohen, published by Fourth Estate (HarperCollins), RRP \$24.99.

**Pádraig Reidy** is news editor for the Index on Censorship; [www.indexoncensorship.org](http://www.indexoncensorship.org)



# Shooting the messenger

When **Nicky Hager** released his investigation of New Zealand's involvement in Afghanistan, other journalists attacked

Fourteen days after the September 11 attacks in 2001, a New Zealand SAS intelligence officer wrote a report for her colleagues on the issues surrounding war in Afghanistan. The "bulk" of al Qaeda was located in other countries, the secret report said, and the Taliban was "as much an idea as an entity" with influence beyond Afghanistan's borders, particularly in Pakistan. If invaded, these forces could "readily revert to an effective guerilla resistance". She said this argued for "well-defined objectives achieved in a brief period of time". Her report was not heeded.

A NZSAS contingent arrived in Kandahar on December 16, the same week that Osama bin Laden escaped into Pakistan. The Taliban government had already fallen. Two months into the deployment, New Zealand's Joint Forces commander visited the SAS soldiers.

The intelligence officer's concerns were already proving correct. The commander's confidential report concluded with dismay that the American commanders appeared to have "no overarching operational campaign plan". There was "a lack of coherent strategy or even clear commander's intent". The long and incoherent war was just beginning. The New Zealand public hadn't yet even been told the SAS was in Afghanistan.

I was able to tell these stories, and hundreds of others, because over several years I interviewed a range of senior officials and military officers and was leaked thousands of classified military and intelligence documents. I wrote it into the book *Other People's Wars, New Zealand in Afghanistan, Iraq and the war on terror*, reviewed in the *Walkley Magazine 2011 Winners Issue*.

After years faced with frustrating military PR and secrecy, I expected the New Zealand media to welcome this information: chapter after chapter on special forces, intelligence, navy and air operations and more, all referenced to internal documents. But the reaction was strikingly negative from several news organisations, ignoring revelations that would normally make the front page and instead attacking me. It raises some interesting issues about journalism.

First, some of the ignoring was for an obvious and understandable reason: it



## Investigative journalism is not an insult to reporting. It's obvious that writing books and daily reporting are just different things

was a book; and, worse, a long book with footnotes. I joke that most journalists will kill for a handful of leaked documents but offer them two boxes full and you've probably lost them. It's fair enough that a big book is too time consuming for fast-turnaround journalists, but here was page after page of revelations on one of the most important issues of the decade. Reporters are dispatched around the country and overseas to chase such stories. Is it so hard to open a book?

In part, a book doesn't fit the formulaic way that most news is handled. A typical "news flurry" involves something happening or being said, some people are quoted reacting and then, generally, the issue disappears again. With my book, the first paragraph of the first news story that made it onto a news website on the launch day was adopted as "the news" by virtually all other media. This single disembodied fact (from pages 248–250) – about CIA agents secretly based inside the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamiyan – was put through the cycle of claim and reaction, a gallop once around the field, before the news machine moved on. Many readers and viewers would have assumed I'd written a book about CIA agents in Bamiyan.

However there was something else at work as well. I had quoted internal military documents containing PR plans for controlling news media and thought

that reporters who had covered the war would feel indignant at this organised manipulation. Some journalists had this reaction. But, interestingly, quite a few were angry at me instead, especially those who had had military-hosted trips to Afghanistan.

It became clear that their professional pride was wounded: when I talked of the military hiding and spinning things, they took it as criticism of their reporting. On the subject of the CIA in Bamiyan, for instance, some reporters angrily declared that I was naive and of course there were CIA officers there ("we all knew..."), while others simultaneously said I was wrong and there were none.

It felt like a Stockholm Syndrome, where captives of military media management were defending the military. Meanwhile the military and the minister of defence got away without having to make a single public comment.

This was silly and unnecessary. Investigative journalism is not an insult to reporting. It's obvious that writing books and daily reporting are just different things. I wouldn't have time for the essential work of daily reporting during a long investigation and reporters usually don't have time for the essential work of investigative journalism while keeping up with daily demands.

To come back to what should be the point, the information I gathered would be valuable to anyone in Australia or New Zealand covering military, foreign affairs and intelligence agencies, military alliances or the Afghanistan war. It shows, up close, what happens to smaller allies in a superpower's war, gives specific insights into growth areas in war fighting such as tactical signals intelligence (surprisingly, I was able to track hundreds of these secret officers, including Australians, using Facebook) and details what our navies, reconstruction teams and so on actually do. The ideas and types of sources should suggest useful leads. If you're interested in these things, I strongly recommend the book. Very rarely does this sort of inside information reach the public.

**Nicky Hager** is known internationally for his investigative writing. His book, *Other People's Wars*, RRP NZ\$44.99, can be ordered from [www.craigpotton.co.nz](http://www.craigpotton.co.nz)

# A wall of flowers

**Tim Page** wanted a memorial to fallen photojournalists on both sides of the Vietnam War. This is how *Requiem* was born

I bumped into Sean Flynn in early 1966, coming out of a "five o'clock follies", the daily briefing by the Joint US Public Affairs Office in Saigon. We bonded over a quick aperitif at the Continental Shelf [the terrace bar at the Continental Hotel], instant brothers, lost souls.

By early 1967, we were together inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) with an ARVN (South Vietnamese) airborne battalion. Flynn and I were embedded with the command group but lost them when the incoming started. We took refuge in a Viet house bomb shelter and lay there terrified, foetusied up, praying for it to stop. I made a promise that this would be my last mission: I was out of there. Sean echoed the sentiment.

But we would meet again in Britain and Paris and then both be drawn back to the conflict, as Michael Herr said in *Dispatches*, "like junkie moths to a flame".

Within weeks I was back flat-sharing in Saigon with Sean and two others above a bar in the heart of downtown Saigon.

As freelancers, there was more to be made out of going to the edge of the conflict, to remote and cut-off posts, to isolated camps and landing zones. Sean and I travelled easily together; Sean always the best dressed man, in a tailored tiger suit or French Para camos.

But on April 19, 1969, my war was blown to a standstill by a mine. I was DOA, evacuated to the US and paralysed down one side after surgery. My last sensation of Sean – my brother, my mate – was of his presence, for I was temporarily blinded. He had flown in from Laos after hearing the news. He brought blessings and a Buddha and passed on his energy and compassion.

One year later, recovering in Los Angeles from more surgery, I learnt that Sean and another buddy, Dana Stone, had been taken prisoner near Chi Pou in eastern Cambodia.

Nearly two decades later, as communism receded in the new atmosphere of *Doi Moi*, or "openness", we were grudgingly welcomed back to explore the still massively damaged Vietnam. We met our counterparts from the other side, and were surprised that some had been embedded in our bureaus.

In 1989, inside the Marble Mountain caves near Da Nang, the spirit of Sean spoke and a series of auspicious events led to an expedition sponsored by Granada TV to what



Sean Flynn, son of movie star Errol, with Tim Page. Photo taken by *Dispatches* author Michael Herr.

we suspected was the scene of Sean and Dana's execution. We returned with three teeth and a filling, perhaps from the dead men, and a film which became *Danger on the Edge of Town* (1991).

I conceived an idea for a memorial to the photojournalists lost on both sides, possibly a stupa encircled with a list of names, astride the 17th parallel, which had been the border between North and South Vietnam. But the Vietnamese authorities weren't interested.

During the making of *Danger on the Edge of Town*, I had unearthed a sizeable collection of Sean's lost work. And that legacy inspired the next move on the memorial chessboard. Sitting with my main Vietnamese mates in a tea shop on Hai Ba Trung Street, I had a glowing bolt of an idea. All I could say was "take me to the archives. I need a complete list of all your Killed in Action and Missing in Action photographers and journalists. No *noms de guerre*, no pseudonyms, just a straight list so we can actually trace their images."

The idea for *Requiem*, a photographic memorial, was born.

The North Vietnamese lost 72 cameramen and women during the conflict, making a total of 135 from all sides. Film was processed in jungle streams, prints made in dugouts, the product protected with cooked rice husks in ammunition boxes. The images I found in the Vietnamese archives, though propaganda tinged, showed the incredible struggle and suffering the other side had gone through. We could always leave and go home; they were in it until liberation or death.

At this stage the late Horst Faas, photographer extraordinaire with two Pulitzers and a Robert Capa Gold Medal, accepted the bait and became involved. Besides being the photo editor of the *époque*, Horst had a grand power of persuasion. He pulled every string of favour

**They had installed a shrine wall with an image of every person listed in the book; it became adorned with flowers**

and friendship. We would assemble a cast of the best and brightest to produce *Requiem*, a book and travelling exhibition of pictures by photographers killed or missing in action during the Vietnam War.

The ball started rolling with an exhibition at the Fujitsa Centre in Tokyo; there was a book edition in Japanese, which sold out. They had installed a shrine wall with an image of every person listed in the book; it became adorned with flowers.

White flowers would be seen in other venues, especially in front of the frame by Henri Huet of the death of Dickey Chapelle to a mine in '66. There was an unspoken pathos in the pearl stud in her ear and the flower in her hat. It happened, too, in Lausanne, Tokyo, Daytona Beach, Washington, D.C. We had struck a chord, a spiritual connection.

The exhibition had its grand opening at the Freedom Forum, then based in Arlington, Virginia, and also took in London, New York, France and Germany.

A group of veterans in Kentucky, who were now CEOs – mellowed, middle-aged Forbes 500 achievers – brought it back to the States. They agreed to continue to support moving it to Hanoi and then permanently to Ho Chi Minh City, where it would be known as *Hoi Niem*, or "our memories".

It was a full circle, mirroring the dreams that Horst and I had embraced seven years back: to have the book, now the show, and to take it to its true home, back to where it all began. *Hoi Niem* would be the first time the Vietnamese photographers were honoured in the public domain.

*Requiem* was the herald of the movement to teach our craft, photojournalism, to the emerging communicators of the now liberated Indochinese countries. To fulfil this mission, the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation was formed, and workshops were held every two years in Vietnam. It was the payback for what we had gleaned, learned and profited from, where many of us had begun our careers, gained our infamy.

**Tim Page** is a British photojournalist. In 1991 he set up the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation to support training for local journalists in Indochina. He raised funds on kickstarter.com for a documentary, *Lost Brothers*, about his quest to establish the fate of the media professionals who went missing in Cambodia, and is currently gathering eyewitness accounts from those who last saw the missing media, before their memories are gone forever

# ... to keep a picture editor happy

**Mike Bowers** has been a picture editor for years, and he knows what's needed to grab his attention. Snappers take note. Photo illustration by **Andrew Meares**

## 1 Make yourself a solution

In every picture editing role I have undertaken, whether it's editing an anniversary special or *The Sydney Morning Herald* news pages, you never actually finish perfecting the edit, you just run out of time. Keep this foremost in your mind when dealing with picture editors of any publication – they are time poor. Offer them a solution, not a problem.

## 2 Ride the line between stalking and persistence

I would generally never answer a first pitch unless the work was exceptional and it fell into the "call back straight away but don't seem overly keen" category. This is a competitive and combative area of the media, especially for people who are starting their career. Persistence is something you need to learn early. In case you're not clear on this – a few follow-up calls or emails is persistence; 10 calls in a day is "call the cops I'm being stalked".

## 3 Be available

Don't be one of those photographers who never picks up the phone, yet can somehow miraculously track down the picture editor at any time of the night or day when they need something. I still have two mobile numbers in my phone marked WWI and WWII: the WW stands for Whingey & Whiney. It's just human nature I'm afraid, but they were not the first people I would approach for the plum assignments. Both were too much hard work, no matter how good the return.

## 4 Less is more

If you are sending your portfolio or a set of pictures as a pitch to an editor keep it tight, embed the photographs in the email, five to eight pictures at the most. Keep the words to a minimum. Any pictorial editor worth anything will be quickly able



to grasp the quality and newsworthiness of any pitch. Don't send pictures as attachments. Most of us have limited time and attention deficit disorder. If I can't get at all the information easily and quickly I will move on.

## 5 Don't oversell

Let your work speak for itself. Don't try to oversell your experience or your idea. There are a lot of photographers out there who make this error. You may indeed have won every award going, but it's still true that "you are only as good as your last picture".

## 6 All gear, no idea

Don't be a gear-head. I could not care less what you have used to take a picture. If it's a beautiful work shot with a pinhole camera you will have my attention.

## 7 Stick to a deadline

If you really want to stand out from the pack, stick to the deadline you are given. There is nothing more frustrating when you are on the production side of the fence than a photojournalist who is unable to deliver to a deadline.

## 8 Be organised, be early, have a back-up plan

Never underestimate the value of trust; it is so slowly won and, once broken, is very hard to repair. I once assigned a photographer to an early morning job on the outskirts of Sydney. After picking up the journalist he discovered he had left his entire kit at home. Try as I might, I can never quite forget his action. Today, of course, he would have been able to save the day with his iPhone.

## 9 Never stop learning

There is an equation in calculus that halves the distance between two points. While the distance decreases every time you run the equation, you never quite reach the destination. Photography is like this. The day you think you have learnt everything is the day you need to think about doing something else. Every picture can be improved, no matter how small that improvement is. The answer to the question "What is the best picture you have taken?" should be "I haven't taken it yet."

## 10 Have a can-do attitude

This does not mean you have to be a yes man (or woman). If I ask you to do something stupid, shoot it, and then shoot the picture in your own way to show me how utterly stupid my vision was. A positive attitude will show up in your work. I might very well be all those names you call me in the back room, but perhaps I was only passing on the wishes of someone higher up the food chain and I will need to show them how utterly stupid their suggestion was in conference, where they will be less likely to interfere again with the photographic department.

**Mike Bowers** is director of photography at The Global Mail and host of "Talking Pictures" on ABC TV's *Insiders*



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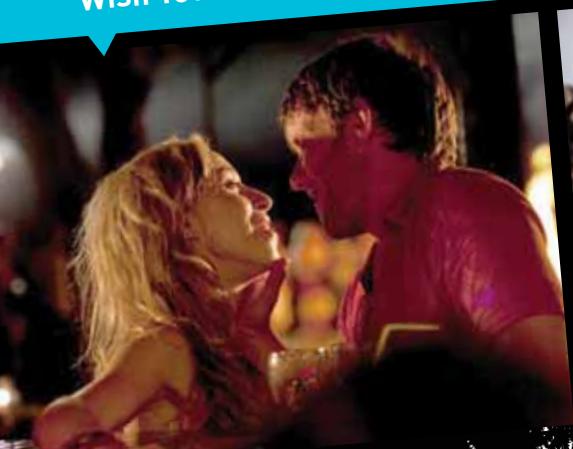


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